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artist

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RODGER SCOTT

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Welcome to issue eight of Creative Artist magazine.

Welcome to the latest issue of Creative Artist magazine.

There's plenty on offer, including a tempting array of workshops from talented artists, plus hints and tips on composition and clever photography.

We highlight a number of Australian and international galleries, coupled with fabulous photos, plus promote some amazing upcoming shows and exhibitions.

Our articles on the lives of artists never fails to inspire us, and inside these pages you'll see

how our various profiled artists each learnt their craft and followed their passion.

We look forward to your feedback. If you wish to be featured in Creative Artist, please email correspondence to:

The Editor, simon@wpco.com.au,
or post your contributions to:
Creative Artist, PO Box 8035,
Glenmore Park, NSW, 2745.

Simon and the team

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Cover image by Robyn Collier





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'TIS THE SEASON



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FOR CREATIVITY!



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INKTENSE WAS: \$342.50 **NOW: \$276.50**



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COLOURSOFT WAS: \$218.50 **NOW: \$182.50**

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15x23cm WAS: \$27.95 **NOW: \$23.95**

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WAS: \$149.50 **NOW: \$114.50**



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The Adelaide Park Lands Art Prize 2016

Images

Below: Scott Hartshorne
 Below, top right: Douglas
 Russell

Below, bottom right:
 C.J. Taylor – Overall Winner

This is the second in the biennial series of the prestigious Adelaide Park Lands Art Prize. Until the first Prize in 2014 there had never been a major art prize with Adelaide as its focus, nor a prize with the Park Lands as its theme.

The Prize is open to all artists, of all ages, from all countries, working in two and three-dimensional art forms including photography.

Prize money: \$31,000 in prize money, including \$20,000 first prize

It is a great opportunity for up-and-coming artists to show their work. At the exhibition of the 2014 finalists, \$24,000 worth of artworks were sold – about one quarter of the work displayed. All artworks are for sale.

The Prize is open for entries and closes 3 December 2015. Finalists will be on display at the Adelaide Festival Centre Artspace from 15 April to 29 May 2016.

The Adelaide Park Lands are the open land that surrounds Adelaide City and North Adelaide; they include the City Squares and North Adelaide Squares, and the theme is to capture the essence of the Park Lands in the artist's chosen medium. The prize is an initiative of the Adelaide Park Lands Preservation Association, Inc (APPA) – an independent, not-for-profit association whose purpose is to promote an awareness and appreciation of Adelaide Park Lands. The Prize is a key part of APPA's program to stimulate the public's awareness, interest and support for the Park Lands.

Entries will be judged solely on artistic merit. The three judges are: Mark Judd – Former curator, SA Museum; Instigator, organiser and sometimes judge of the Waterhouse Natural Science Art Prize; Daryl Austin – Head of Painting, Adelaide Central School of Art, 2007 -2015. His work is held in major collections including the Art Gallery of SA and the SA Parliament; Vicki Reynolds – Studio Head of Printmaking at Adelaide College of the Arts. In her own work she uses printmaking, photography and mixed media; among her many qualifications she has a certificate in wooden boat building.

Web: www.parklandsart.com

Email: info@parklandsart.com



Young Australian Artists Explore A Resurgent 'Global South'



Primavera is the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia's annual exhibition of Australian artists aged 35 and under. Since 1992, the Primavera series has showcased the works of artists and curators in the early stages of their career, many of whom have gone on to exhibit nationally and internationally. In 2015, Primavera celebrates its 24th edition.

Hailing from four states and territories across Australia, the young artists in this year's exhibition are: Abdul Abdullah (born in 1986, Perth, lives and works in Sydney), Heather Douglas (born in 1994, Titjikala, NT, where she still lives and works), Taloi Havini (born in 1981, Arawa, autonomous region of Bougainville, migrated to Australia in 1990, lives and works in Melbourne), brothers Vincent and Vaughan O'Connor (both born in 1985, Sydney, where they still live and work), Steaphan Paton (born in 1985, Mildura, Vic, lives and works in Melbourne) and Lucy Simpson (born in 1981, Sydney, where she still lives and works).

Primavera 2015's curator Nicole Foreshow explains: 'The practices foregrounded in this exhibition, and the cultures and conditions of life, work and history that they emerge from, are situated within a broader experience of a resurgent 'Global South', within which peoples belonging to a diversity of cultures question received ideas of identity, culture and power.'

Foreshow adds: 'The importance of this extends to Aboriginal art-making in the 'South' or South Eastern region of Australia. There is a commonly

held perception that cultural practices and activities have ceased, or have changed too much to have any value or visible relevance to broad audiences. Yet as the work of artists in this year's Primavera demonstrates, Aboriginal art practices emerging from the wreckage of first contact and generations of colonial impacts are assuming an increasingly important role in the continuation of our nation's cultural strength.'

With a reputation for uncovering new artistic talent, this year's Primavera artists join the ranks of some of Australia's leading contemporary artists including Shaun Gladwell, Gail Hastings, Jess MacNeil and more recently, Rebecca Baumann, Kate Mitchell, Marian Tubbs and Paul Yore.

Museum of Contemporary Art Australia
140 George St
The Rocks, NSW, 2000
Web: mca.com.au
Ph: 02 9245 2400



Images

Above left: Vincent & Vaughan O'Connor
 Millionth Acre
 (production image, detail) 2015

Laser etched and oxidised steel plates, pine saplings (pinus radiata), copper wire stock, nickel silver wire stock, amplifier components, speaker cones, custom electronics, deer antler, digital holograms, 3D prints, plywood
 Image courtesy and © the artist

Photograph: Nicole Foreshow
 Above right: Steaphan Paton
 Cloaked Combat 2013
 Bark, carbon fibre, synthetic polymer resin, synthetic polymer paint
 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
 Yvonne Pettengell Bequest, 2013

Image courtesy the artist and Anna Pappas Gallery, Melbourne © the artist

Left: Lucy Simpson
 yilaalu (detail) 2015
 Paperclay, ironbark string, feathers
 Image courtesy and © the artist
 Photograph: Nicole Foreshow

EXHIBITION
9 October 2015 –
31 January 2016

Lurid Beauty: Australian Surrealism and its Echoes

Images

Below left:

Pat Brassington
Voicing 2001, from the
Gentle series 2001
digital colour print. 56.2
x 76.1cm (image) 93.4 x
127.4cm (sheet). ed. 1/4
National Gallery of
Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased with funds
arranged by Loti Smorgon
for Contemporary
Australian Photography,
2001© Pat Brassington,
courtesy Stills Gallery,
Sydney and Arc One
Gallery, Melbourne
Below right:

James Gleeson
Australian 1915–2008
We inhabit the corrosive
littoral of habit 1940
oil on canvas, 40.7 x
51.3cm.
National Gallery of
Victoria, Melbourne.
Anonymous gift, 1941
© Courtesy of the artist's
estate

Surrealism was one of the most influential artistic movements of the 20th century. Noted for their experimental and playful approaches, Surrealist artists sought to challenge artistic conventions, opening their work to unexpected results and to the accidental image. Through techniques such as automatic drawing and collage, artists worked with the aim of liberating the unconscious mind to effect social and political revolution; others created hallucinatory and dream-like images to reveal their innermost desires.

Surrealism shook up the staid Australian art world of the 1930s and attracted a generation of young radicals who went on to become some of the Australia's most esteemed artists. Surrealism's echoes and reverberations continue to be felt into the present day, with its rich legacy evident in

the practice of some of Australia's most exciting contemporary artists.

Lurid Beauty presents more than 200 paintings, drawings, collages, sculptures, fashion, films and photographs as well as considering theatre and performance in an exuberant exploration of Surrealism and its profound influence on Australian art and creative life. Juxtaposing historical and contemporary works, the immersive exhibition showcases the work of artists including Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, Max Dupain, Erik Thake, James Gleeson, Julie Rrap, Pat Brassington, Leigh Bowery and David Noonan.

Exhibition: 9 October 2015 – 31 January 2016
The Ian Potter Centre, NGV Australia
Exhibition admission fees apply



Renae Carlson: Kyoto Ravine



“Combining sketching with materials including wire, bamboo, textiles, and burnt and marked paper, the intricate world of Kyoto Ravine is one in which beauty is not a spectacle but rather something sensed in elusive, fading moments.”

Dungog-based artist Renae Carlson has created a haunting, contemplative experience with Kyoto Ravine, her Zen-influenced series of collages. Combining sketching with materials including wire, bamboo, textiles, and burnt and marked paper, the intricate world of Kyoto Ravine is one in which beauty is not a spectacle but rather something sensed in elusive, fading moments.

Carlson's relationship with Japan began in the early 1990s when, as a student at the Canberra School of Art, she was awarded a scholarship to Kyoto Seika University.

Kyoto was the Imperial capital of old Japan for more than 1,000 years and spared destruction in WWII only because US War Secretary Henry L. Stimson had made repeated pre-war visits to the city, developing a deep appreciation for Kyoto and its cultural heritage.

As Carlson found, the aesthetics of Zen are everywhere in Kyoto with its soot-layered temples, meditative gardens, love of the handcrafted, marking of the seasons and their differing moods and what they suggest about phases of life.

While not depicting the sights of Kyoto, Carlson's works resonate with these aesthetics. In her off-centre, unsettling creations, she invites the viewer into an awareness of wabi sabi, the quiet beauty of austerity, imperfection. She explores mono no aware, the melancholy grace of impermanence, and yūgen, an appreciation of darkness, unknowing, and that which eludes inspection.

While not working on her art, Carlson has been a photojournalist in conflict zones of the southern Philippines and is a retained firefighter and rescue operator with Fire & Rescue NSW.

Exhibition: 12 September – 22 November 2015

Maitland Regional Art Gallery

230 High Street

Maitland, NSW, 2320

Email: artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://mrag.org.au/>

Ph: 02 4934 9859

Open: Tuesday – Sunday: 10am - 5pm (closed

Mondays & public holidays)

Image

Left: Renae Carlson, Sanjusangendo Temple, 2014, Japanese Gampi paper, Kakishibu paper, paper cord, ink and graphite, 28 x 38cm

Undiscovered – Photographic works by Michael Cook

**NOW
SHOWING**

The Australian National Maritime Museum, Sydney has an intimate exhibition featuring photographic works by celebrated Aboriginal artist Michael Cook. Undiscovered - Photographic works by Michael Cook offers visitors a contemporary Indigenous perspective on European settlement in Australia.

The 10 striking large scale images shift roles and perspectives around the notion of European 'discovery' of Australia, a land already inhabited by

its original people, and reflect on our habitual ways of thinking and seeing our history.

The series questions who really discovered Australia while making reference to what was here, what has been introduced and the effect this had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their country and culture.

The images are set on the shoreline looking out to sea, the site that brought the first ships to Australia, and the photos depict an Aboriginal man role-switching with his colonisers. Throughout the exhibition the images show Australian native animals as well as modern introduced objects including an armchair, bicycle and wheelbarrow.

Donna Carstens, Manager of Indigenous Programs, said, "We are delighted to have acquired this stunning series of works into the National Maritime Collection, encouraging people to think differently about European exploration of Australia. The exhibition is a significant contribution to NAIDOC Week and complements the museum's ongoing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs."

The museum's well-established Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Programs have, over several years, been engaged with communities and reviving traditional watercraft-building skills and canoe culture. Last year the museum was the first venue to host the significant East Coast Encounters exhibition, re-imagining the first encounters between Australia's First People and James Cook. And last month it hosted a First Nations cultural exchange, giving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students the opportunity to share traditional knowledge with Hawaiian students. Future projects include the Koori Art Expressions exhibition in November and a major Indigenous watercraft conference in 2016.

Exhibition runs until 15 November 2016.

Australian National Maritime Museum

Darling Harbour

Web: anmm.gov.au

Ph: 02 9298 3777



Image

Left: Undiscovered #4 (2010) © Michael Cook. ANMM Collection.

Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi

The world's largest annual free-to-the-public outdoor sculpture exhibition, Sculpture by the Sea, returns to the spectacular Bondi to Tamarama coastal walk from 22 October - 8 November 2015.

For the 19th year, this stunning stretch of Sydney coastline will be transformed once again, featuring more than 100 works by Australian and international artists. More than 30 international artists will be showcased this year, including artists from Brazil, Poland, Japan, Austria, the USA and the Czech Republic.

One of Sydney's best attended and most photogenic events, Sculpture by the Sea attracts more than 500,000 visitors over 18 days and for many it heralds the beginning of summer in Sydney.

This year Macquarie Group return as Principal Sponsor of Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi, with the \$60,000 Macquarie Group Sculpture Prize the most generous annual sculpture prize in Australia, and the award winning work being gifted for permanent public display.



Images

Above: Koichi Ishino's Windstone, Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi 2014.

Photo by G Carr.

Left: Lou Lambert's currawong, Sculpture by the Sea, Bondi 2014.

Photo by Clyde Yee.

Web: www.sculpturebythesea.com

Email: info@sculpturebythesea.com

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A Busy Life

Artist, journalist, editor, photographer, story & poetry writer, researcher, naturalist – Kathleen Davies has spent a lifetime recording Australia in many mediums.



Kathleen Davies



From a space in her home overlooking a significant wetland system filled with waterbirds, at the headwaters of the Coldstream River, NSW, artist Kathleen photographs, paints, illustrates and writes. She has built up a catalogue of completed works and reference material from her current home, her travels and from previous places she has lived and worked, as she studies the environment around her.

Kathleen first exhibited some of her artwork at agricultural shows while still in primary school. In later years her illustrations, paintings, photographs and writing have found homes in many public and government publications, park signs, private collections and more.

"I've always painted, collected specimens to study, and written about these things. Photography followed soon after and with digital cameras that has become even easier.

"I've worked with NSW National Parks and Wildlife, Department of Environment and Climate Change, Parks Australia in the Northern Territory, and many other environmentally focussed agencies. I've also worked as a journalist, photographer and editor throughout the north, mid north coast, the Tablelands and western slopes regions of NSW.

"I've travelled Australia, lived in some extraordinary places and worked in many and varied jobs that have provided me with skills and knowledge I never thought possible and which often pushed me well outside my comfort zone. Being in these places presented opportunities to capture images I would otherwise never have seen."

The camera as an artist's tool of trade...

Many artists have used photographs as references for their work, with the camera becoming a valued addition to the artist's tool box.

A fascination with Australia – natural, cultural and historical – led Kathleen to regularly highlight Australian-themed subjects in her varied work. This work often begins with a photograph, which is transformed into a painting or illustration, or accompanied by a story or poem.

With more than 40 years producing artwork, photographs and writings, Kathleen's work still flies under the radar, but is well known by those who have sought her to commission work or by those who know her skill, knowledge, passion for nature and determination to use her artwork to educate others. >>

Photos

Top: Kathleen Davies

Left: Sunsets



"I recently completed a series of 12 line drawings for the Myer family who own Yulgilbar Station in northern NSW. These works were developed from my own photographs of wildlife species found on Yulgilbar Station. The project was to highlight the work being done to protect threatened wildlife species at Yulgilbar with the Australian Wildlife Conservancy.

"I've written about and illustrated aspects of the Australian environment since childhood and have worked to enhance appreciation and enthusiasm in others for wildlife, natural environments and cultural heritage."

From photograph to painting...

"I found it easy to use a photograph to aid my artwork, as often the light or subject was not available for the length of time I needed it, or the weather didn't favour my work. Going back to the days of film cameras it was a bit hit and miss as to whether I captured the image I really wanted, but I could always adapt it from my memory or notes. I still use some of those early printed photographs."

Working as a journalist added to her skills in photography, improving her eye for detail, composition, and lighting. It also provided added



Photos

This page
Above: Lavadia
Right: Emu

Opposite page
Top: Paddockpics
Bottom: Lavadia



inspiration and opportunity to obtain references for portraiture and scenes.

"I try to produce artworks that are as realistic as I can possibly make them with my selected medium such as graphite or coloured pencil, pen, watercolour, acrylics, oils. Often colour changes are rendered in the paintings that I feel are not represented well in the original photographic images. As a replacement for colour in original photograph,s illustrated images are reproduced with pen line work to give the illusion of detail, shadow gradations and movement. The photographs are an aid to producing the finished artwork, and they accompany visual observations, field notes, memory and research."

Keep it simple – use auto...

"My current cameras are Nikon – a D3200 DSLR and a D5000 DSLR, one equipped with a 300mm lens, the other with a wide angle and macro. I use the 300mm lens on the D3200 mostly in sports mode to capture distant wildlife or closer images of particular areas of a landscape. I use this one in sports mode to bring me closer to wildlife, particularly birds, and capture moments frozen in time as they take flight. Using the telephoto 300mm lens also allows me to obtain a closer image without the need to print enlargements.

"Without getting too technical - when bringing an image closer with the telephoto, the background >>





blurs to varying degrees depending on the final focal length, creating a shorter field of focus. I like this type of photography and use this in my painted images. It reduces background detail and highlights the main subject, concentrating the eye on one detailed object. And it's the detail I am looking for in the images to give me more option for my final artworks.

"The smaller and wider 18 – 55mm lens is used to capture the wide expanse of landscapes, which is restricted in the narrower view of the telephoto lens. I use the 18 – 55mm lens with its macro capabilities to get up close to insects, plants and other still subjects.

"I use the natural light where possible, hoping to reproduce (as accurately as possible) images that are close to what is seen with the naked eye.

"Reflective or light surfaces, such as a sheet of white paper, upturned white umbrella or silver car windshield protector, even water surfaces or light beach sand on occasion, can help with extra lighting on subjects if a flash is deemed too harsh. Using a flash also takes away from the colour and mood of an object, although it can be useful in some circumstances such as brightening a shaded subject where surrounding light is quite bright. Reflective surfaces can bounce light to where you might need it – the further away from the subject the duller the lighting. Keep in mind



this can change the angles, intensity and amount of shadows.

"I frequently use the camera in Auto mode as it is fast, effective and reduces my need to 'play' with the manual settings, especially when the image I'm after is fleeting or if I'm pressed for time. The camera does all the work.

"If I'm after a photo as an artwork on its own, then I might spend more time playing with settings, but usually I'm only after a reference so Auto is fine. That said, Auto can also produce some incredible photos which make great exhibition pieces for me!

"The transition to digital cameras has opened up a whole new world for those of us who use photographs as artistic references. Many images can be captured, deleted, reshot, without huge expense. Images can be printed out or viewed on a computer screen. I find the camera a valued tool of trade now as an artist.

"When producing pen illustrations from my photographs I often print out images on my black and white printer and use those as references as the monotonous, dark and light shadows and highlights make illustration easier for me. This process is useful for natural history or scientific illustration work – the colour is then not a distraction for me, so I can concentrate more on line detail and shading. Specimens also have a 'shelf life', so having photos as reference helps with details and colours that have

disappeared over time or where specimens such as particular parts of plants cannot be used as live reference material.

"Using photographs also provides opportunities to manipulate artwork compositions. For example you may take two photos of the same scene, but use differing components of each in your final work.

"I find photographs very effective when I want to paint sunrises or sunsets. The colours disappear so quickly that I would never get them on canvas, so digital cameras allow me to save the images I see. I can then paint the spectacular visions in all their glory at my leisure.

"I also love the silhouettes produced at these times of day, so a vivid sunrise for example creates a background for dark shapes in the foreground such as trees, birds roosting, or old fences etc. I would miss these colourful images if not for my camera."

Current exhibitions

- Pyramids Road Wines, Ballandean, Queensland – 2014 to present – 'A Natural Selection' solo exhibition.
- Following on from the Clarence Valley Plunge Art Festival held throughout April 2015, works are now included as a continuing exhibition at Lawrence Tavern, Clarence Valley, NSW - nature themed artworks solo exhibition. ■

By appointment – inspection of artworks and enquiries at home studio – Casuarina Place, Lavadia, NSW, Australia. Email: brolgacountry@gmail.com OR call 0427 477 143 Enquiries can be made for Natural History Art, Writing & Photography and combination Workshops and Guest Speaker Presentations in regional areas.

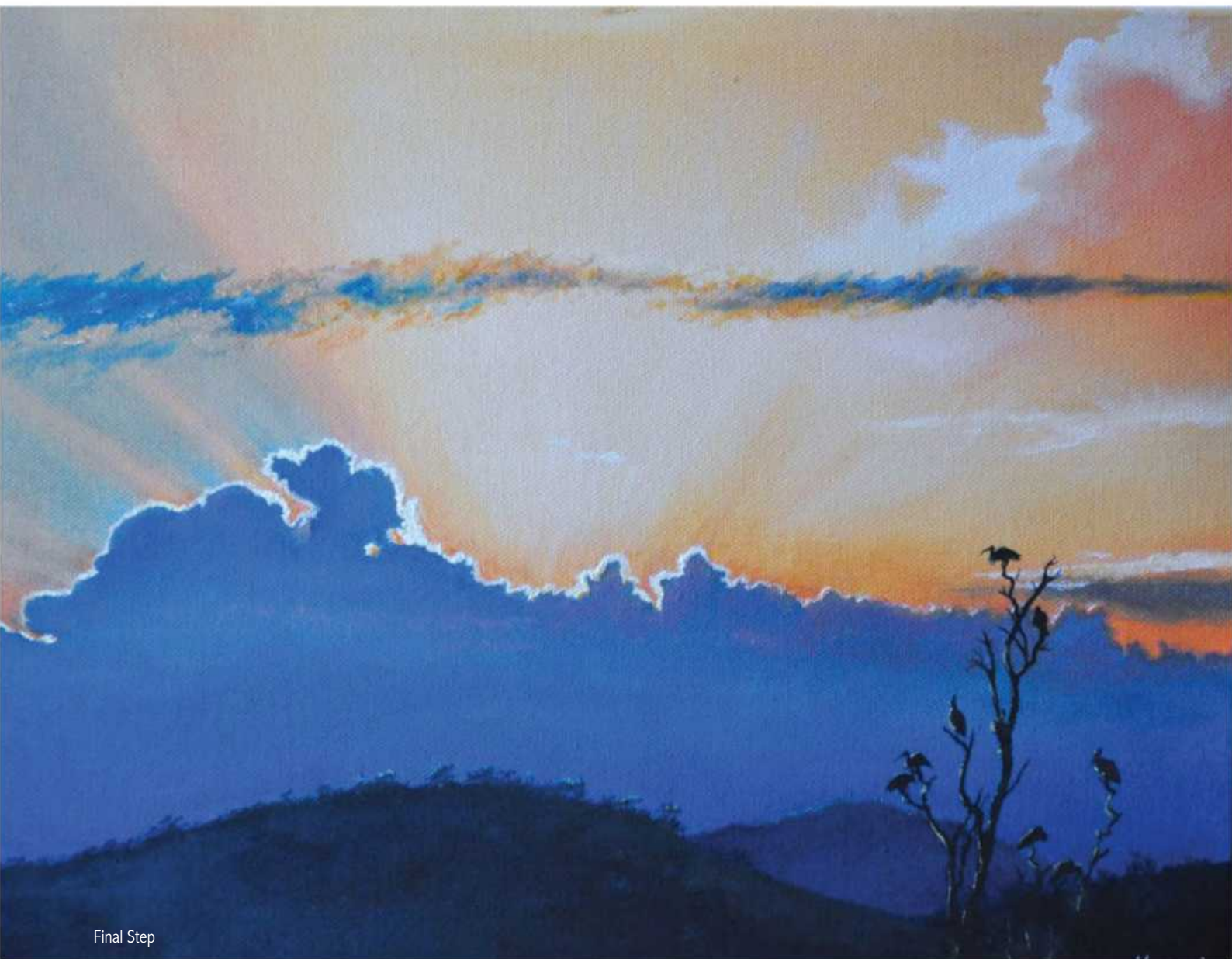
Photos

This page
Above: Birds

Opposite page
Top: Sunrise
Bottom: Woolli

Spectacular Summer Sunrise

Capturing the fleeting beauty of a sunrise is a challenge, so hints and instructions are incredibly helpful.



Final Step



Step 1 – Reference photo



Steps 2 and 3

MATERIALS

- Clean lint-free cloth
- Primed stretched canvas
- Paints
 - Prussian Blue
 - Carmine
 - Titanium White
 - Cadmium Yellow Light Hue
 - Vermillion
 - Lemon Yellow
 - Black
 - Cadmium Orange
- Brushes
 - 000
 - No 4
 - No 10

Step One

Sunrises and sunsets are spectacular expressions of nature, but they can disappear so quickly. So, to capture them in all their glory I wait and watch with my trusty DSLR Nikons on hand to capture the changing spectacle, whether frosty morning or smoky, heat hazed evening.

Taking care not to aim straight into a bright sun, I use both the telephoto and the wide angle to capture particular images to choose from. The telephoto allows me to get up closer to cloud structures, particular places in the landscape etc. It also changes the finished photo as more light is let in, so the cooler tones disappear and what is left is brilliant orange and gold.

With the image I'm using for this demonstration I've tried to recreate the beauty and interesting features of the particular sunrise. A simple trip to town to print the selected images and I'm away with brush and oil paints on the canvas! In this case the painting is on canvas, but I

also produce works on varying grades of paper or card and Masonite board.

Step Two

Propped on a small desk easel, the primed canvas is divided into horizon line and major features as recognisable in the photograph. The photograph, postcard size, is kept close to the canvas to refer to constantly for colour and some detail reference. I also printed out a larger A4 size black and white copy of the image to use as reference for enlarging on the canvas.

Step Three

Mixing a selection of oil paints with thinning mediums, I use a thin long hair brush to wash in horizon line and mountain lines. Then I select a large flat brush and, with thinned mixed paint for sky colours, I brush that on to cover the canvas. I then often use a soft, lint-free cloth to swirl and blend the paint to a softer finish. >>

Kathleen Davies



Step 4

Step Four

I then work with the large brush on the mountains, background and some darker foreground areas, testing the colour against the original photo until I'm happy with the choice. If softening or blending is needed here I sometimes use the cloth or a dry flat brush.

With oils I leave the work to dry for sometimes a few days before proceeding with any further work on it to avoid 'muddying' the colours.

I blend and build light, thinned layers of colour to give a translucent quality.

While continuing to work on the painting I will turn the work around to gain easier access to sections, and also to get a different view of the work. Holding the image up to a mirror and looking at the reflected image helps in examining if the painting is looking as it should, for example if proportions or perspectives are correct.

Step Five

When the main painting is dry I then put in any foreground items such as trees, birds, fences, especially if these are dark silhouettes.

Final Step

I add in any extra highlights after most of the image is dry. This is done with the thin long haired brush and a rounded bristle brush to give the textured look of leaves and bush, and fine lines particularly around cloud edges and birds.

Contact details:

By appointment – inspection of artworks and enquiries at home studio –
Casuarina Place, Lavadia, NSW.
Email: brolgacountry@gmail.com OR
call 0427 477 143 ■



Step 5

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Maitland Regional Art Gallery

Images

Top: Façade of Maitland Regional Art Gallery designed by Walter Liberty Vernon. Image courtesy Clare Hodgins
Above: MRAG opening winter 2015

Steeped in history, the Federation Gothic building housing Maitland Regional Art Gallery (MRAG) in the lower Hunter Valley of NSW is an awe-inspiring example of early 1900s architecture. Officially opened in 1910, it was constructed to house the Maitland Technical College, which it continued to do until 1987. Technical education experienced many changes during this life of the building, and only two years later the building behind the Gallery was added to provide more class space. If you look closely at the brickwork of the two

buildings, it is clear that they were to be eventually joined by a walkway.

The main building at the front of the site which now houses the Gallery is not only vitally important because of its role in technical education; architecturally, it is one of the most significant buildings in Maitland and, in fact, it has features which are of great importance state-wide. Designed by the then government architect, Colonel W. L. Vernon, the building has a structural system which is one of the earliest of its type in NSW.



Another remarkable feature is the cantilevered marble staircase. The white marble treads of the stairs with grey marble supports are distinguished even further by a rare rose coloured Newell post. Lighting the staircase is an enormous art nouveau, stained glass skylight. Look up and enjoy!

The resounding impact upon walking into the Gallery is one of space and light. With a ceiling height of more than five metres, even the two metre wide hallway at the rear of the main gallery is spacious enough to hang additional works. Constructed with creativity and technical achievement well ahead of its time, the unique features of the building certainly emphasise that Walter Liberty Vernon remains an important architect in NSW's history. Of undeniable heritage significance, Maitland Regional Art Gallery

provides a visual feast. Art and architecture work in tandem and the result is magnificent.

History of the collection

The MRAG Collection began in 1957 when the first works were purchased by Maitland City Council with the intent to create an art collection for the City of Maitland. These works were selected from entrants in the inaugural Maitland Art Prize of 1957. From 1965 until 2004 the Maitland Art Prize was an



Images

Above: Power + Colour Contemporary Aboriginal Painting from the Pat Corrigan Collection.
Photo © Clare Hodgins

EXHIBIT A



acquisitive prize, with the winning artworks being presented to the Maitland City collection. One of the gallery's treasured works is the winning entry of the 1966 Maitland Art Prize, the iconic painting *Legend IV*, 1965, by John Coburn.

In 1975, Brough House in Church Street, Maitland was refurbished to become the first gallery space for the new Maitland City Art Gallery. The MRAG Collection continued to grow through purchases made by the art gallery and the Gallery Society, winning entries from the Maitland Art Prize, and gifts from the community and benefactors. Artworks acquired into the collection over that period include works by renowned Australian artists such as William Dobell, Margaret Olley, George Baldessin, Charles Blackman, Brett Whiteley and Tim Leura Tjapaltjarri.

In 2003 the gallery moved to High Street and became known as Maitland Regional Art Gallery. In 2005 MRAG's collection took on a new direction as a result of a new collection policy which was to focus on collecting works on paper. Since then the MRAG Collection has grown from 700 artworks to more than 4,000 artworks, due to discerning acquisitions by the gallery's Cultural Director Joe Eisenberg as well as donations. Artworks acquired since 2005 include works by Sidney Nolan, Tim Storrier, James Gleeson, Martin Sharp, Salvatore Zofrea, John Olsen, Euan Macleod, Suzanne Archer, Alan Jones, Ken Whisson, Adrian Lockhardt, Judy Watson, Gloria Petyarre and Lloyd Rees.





Permanent displays

Although the MRAG Collection predominantly focuses on the collection of works on paper, it is quite diverse and includes sub-collections, including Images of Maitland; Les Darcy Collection; Asian Collection, and a small African Sculpture collection. There are also selected works outside of the collection focus that were retained, such as sculptures and Aboriginal bark paintings.

Past exhibitions and highlights

This year alone the gallery has hosted 17 exhibitions and hosts a weekly 'Free Art Sunday' event along with numerous other weekly, monthly and one-off workshops and classes.

A festival of eight exhibitions including the work of more than 250 artists, 100 plus events, two public art installations and one big party were hosted on the 2nd May – 21st June 2015. The exhibitions over this period included:

- The piano has been drinking (not me)
A parting gift to the City of Maitland by Joe Eisenberg and 170 artists and donors
- An empty chair: 10 years of paper
A spotlight on the MRAG Collection over the last decade
- The Maitland Wonder: Les Darcy
Les Darcy images from the MRAG Collection
- Taking on Les Darcy: Mr Skel
Larger than life size stencils of the great man himself at the High Street Entrance
- Showcase No3
Artwork by Year 7-12 local high school students
- Ascendance: Trevor Weekes



A stellar art installation of ascending birds inside the art gallery

- On the make: a collection story
The ongoing love affair between the MRAG Collection and its donors as told through a unique suite of silkscreen prints donated by Michael Hobbs
- A gallery of people: looking back
A tribute to the people of MRAG over the last decade through the lens of the Maitland Mercury newspaper and MRAG awards and publications

Upcoming exhibition:

Renae Carlson: Kyoto Ravine 12 September – 22 November 2015 (see our 'Vibe' section for more details)

**Maitland Regional Art Gallery
230 High Street**

Maitland, NSW, 2320

Email: artgallery@maitland.nsw.gov.au

Web: <http://mrag.org.au/>

Ph: 02 4934 9859

**Open: Tuesday – Sunday: 10am - 5pm
(closed Mondays & public holidays)**

Images

Top: Krazy Kunst –
Michael Bell &
Menno Fahl.

Above: Maitland
Regional Art Gallery
building side image

Opposite page
Top: Alan Jones, Paper
and wood: collecting
ideas exhibition hosted
2013. Photo © Clare
Hodgins
Middle: Artist talk with
Michael Bell.
Bottom: Object
Urbanities
Tracy Luff, Alison
Coates, Lizzie
Buckmaster-Dove &
Jane Gillings.



A lifetime love of birds and animals is evident in the incredibly detailed watercolour and gouache paintings created by this artist.

Paintings

This page
Above left: Long Tailed Finch
Above right: Olive Backed Sun Bird

Opposite page
Blue Wrens

The Wildlife Realist

I began my journey to painting in 1987 at a Council of Adult Education watercolour course. At that stage I had no idea what I wanted to paint, but felt that being able to create a painting would be a great creative outlet. I had this misguided idea that watercolour would be easy. Wrong! While on the course, I also learnt about gouache, or opaque watercolour, as opposed to transparent watercolour. That was a medium that I had never heard of. I tried various subjects, mainly landscapes, but eventually settled on wildlife, as I have always loved birds and animals and felt I could be more passionate about these subjects. Wildlife presented a problem in that you have to seek it out. Unlike a landscape, which sits and waits for you, wildlife doesn't do that, in fact in most cases, it actively tries to get away from

human beings. That meant reference material was required to help get the realism I required. The reference material comes from a number of sources, such as magazines, books, videos and my own photographs. An easy source of reference in the local zoo, or wildlife park. That will get you started.

A few words of warning about the use of reference material. Nearly all wildlife artists use photographs these days. What looks good, or is acceptable in a photograph, won't necessarily look good as a painting. If you are using multiple photographic references, where there are different lighting sources, make sure the lighting is consistent in the painting. Don't use other people's photographs, unless you have their permission, or substantially change things. There are professional





photographers in America who make a lot of money suing artists who use their images for paintings. Even when you do realist work, you can change things from the photograph. Examples would be to change the background, change the branch, or add leaves. Doing one, or all of those things, will change the look of the painting, compared to the photo.

So, armed with reference material and some basic watercolour techniques, I started to paint wildlife paintings. My early attempts were pretty awful compared to what I produce today, but at the time I felt they weren't too bad. Over the ensuing years my techniques have changed dramatically. Perhaps the event that had the greatest influence on my technique was attending a wildlife art class with Belgian artist Carl Brenders, who ran a five-day workshop in Montana in 2000. I've done a number of wildlife art workshops, but Carl is the only artist who uses the same mediums as I do. This meant that I could relate directly to everything he said and did.

I use watercolour and gouache, but there is more gouache than watercolour in my works. Gouache has advantages in that it is an opaque medium, which allows a lot more flexibility for adding texture to the painting, and it can be re-workable. Simply dampening the dry paint on the painting will allow you to push the paint around, so you can change things later if you decide you're not happy with the ways it's working. There is a disadvantage to this in that if you try to put a wash over the painting, the underlying paint will lift and mix with the wash. That

Paintings

This page
Right: Buff Breasted
Paradise Kingfisher
Below: Blue and Yellow
Macaw

Opposite page
Top: Royal Spoonbill
Middle: Spotted
Pardalote
Bottom: Tiger Quoll

could destroy all the work you've already done, so washes are basically not done in gouache work. You can get round that by using an airbrush, or some dry brushing. I use both of those techniques.

Over the years I have been fortunate enough to win a number of awards and prizes. My first big prize was in 1996 at the Camberwell Art Show, where I won the Best Wildlife prize. I have now won that prize three times. Another big event for me was getting work selected in 2005 and 2006 for the prestigious "Arts for the Parks" exhibition in Wyoming. Unfortunately, the 2006 show was the final show. In more recent years, I was pleased to have paintings accepted into the last three "Focus on Nature" exhibitions at the New York State Museum in Albany, New York.

My general approach to painting a subject is to first create an underpainting that will allow me to build a more detailed work over the top. >>



Rodger Scott





Paintings

Above: White Plumed Honeyeaters

Below left: Varigated Wren1

Below right: Caper White

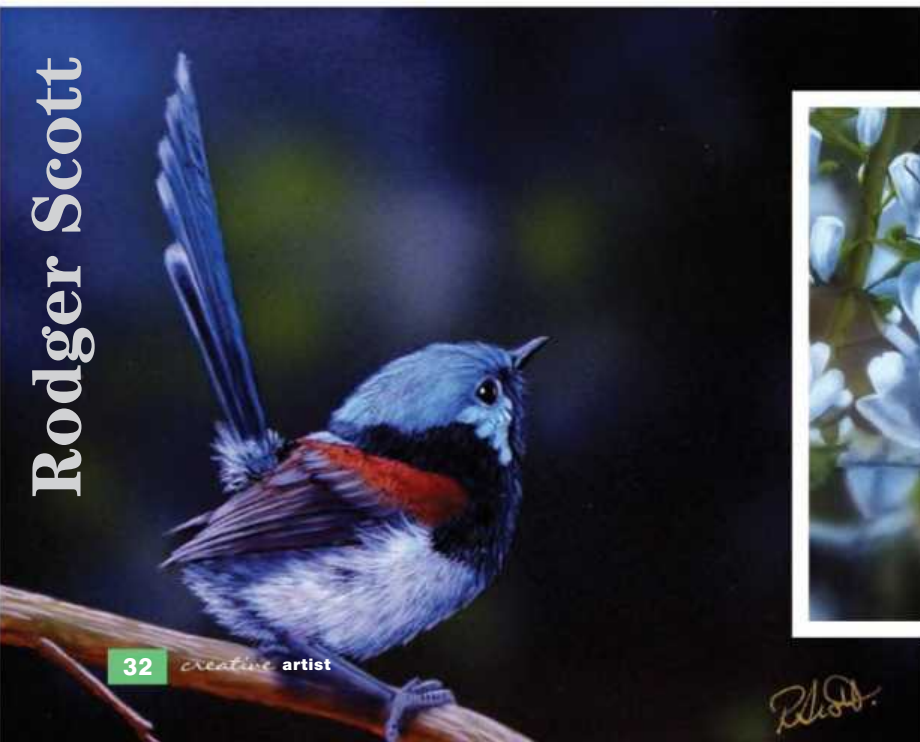
Gouache allows me to do that, however any opaque medium will allow the same flexibility.

I am not a purist, and, if necessary, I will use other materials in my work, like coloured pencils, when I think it will achieve a better result, but having said that, the majority of my work is just gouache and watercolour.

My style is realist, but not photorealism. My paintings reflect what the subject looks like, but I doubt if you would ever confuse my work with a photograph.

You can see examples of my finished work on my web site www.rodgerscott.com. The site also includes my biography, awards and contact details. ■

Rodger Scott



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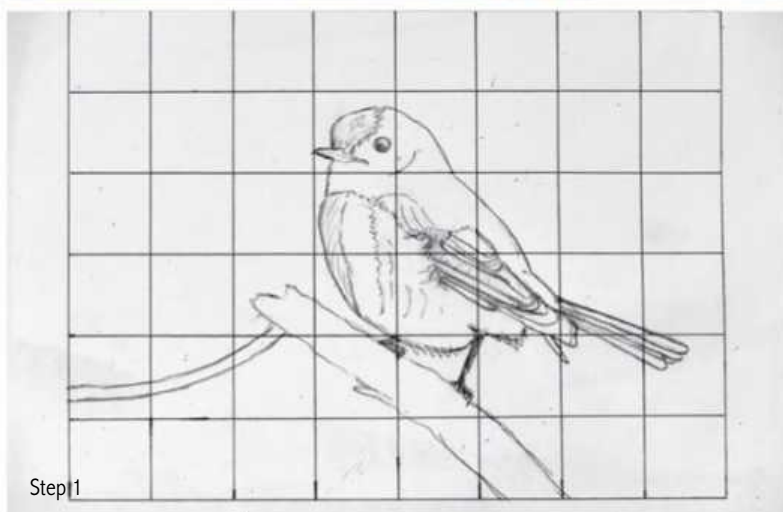
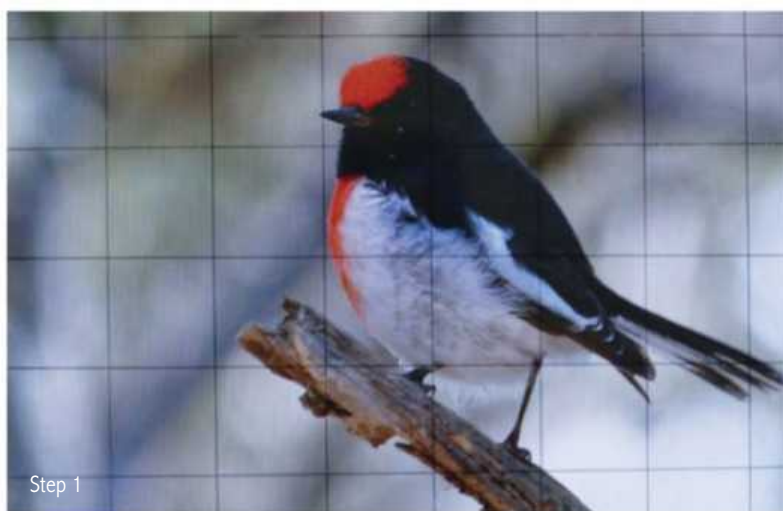
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The Red Capped Robin

The meticulous attention to detail brings this brightly coloured Australian chap to life, so much so that you can almost hear his “dit drr it” chirping.



Materials List

- Paper:
 - Fabriano 600gm hot press paper
 - White Saral Transfer paper
 - Black carbon paper
- Brushes:
 - NAM 12 Red Filbert
 - 70mm hake (Franchville #6)
 - Holbein two inch and one inch goat's hair hakes
 - Windsor and Newton Series 7 #2 brush
 - Roymac 3550 Golden Sable 00 brush
- Holbein Watercolour Paints:
 - Neutral Tint and Sepia
- Art Spectrum Gouache:
 - White
 - Black
 - Vermillion
 - Burnt Umber
 - Burnt Sienna
 - Primrose Yellow
 - Middle Green
 - Naples Yellow
 - Sky Blue

Before any painting is commenced, a number of decisions have to be made. The first for me is the subject. I have thousands of photographs of wildlife (mostly but not exclusively birds) and a decision needs to be made on what species of animal, insect, or bird will be the subject of my new painting. The second decision will be the support base that I use for the painting. For the purpose of this demonstration I will be using the Fabriano 600gm hot press paper. The thickness of the paper relieves me of the necessity of stretching the paper, which is something that always seems to cause me difficulty. Further decisions need to



be made on how closely I'll follow the photograph, the lighting direction and the size of the painting.

Step One

For this demonstration I will be painting a favourite bird of mine, a Red Capped Robin. Having selected a photograph, I draw the bird using grids to help me keep correct proportions.

Step Two

With all of my paintings, I always start with the background and work forward. When using watercolour

paper I blend the gouache on the paper directly, placing dabs of paint directly out of the tube onto the paper and then push them around with a large brush.

To begin with, I thoroughly wet the paper and apply colour directly to the surface. Then with a larger brush I push the colours around so that there is a rough blend. The brush I normally use for this is NAM 12 Red Filbert, but any bigger brush should work just as well, as long as the bristles aren't too soft. The colours used on this background are White, Black, Primrose Yellow, Burnt Umber and Middle Green, all from Art Spectrum. >>



Step 2



Step 3A



Step 3B



Step 3C



Step 4A



Step 4B



Step 5A



Step 5B

Step Three

I now take a stiff hake brush and blend it a bit more (the paper still needs to be wet to do this). I used a 70mm hake (Francheville #6) with stiff bristles. To finish off the blending I then resorted to the very much softer (Holbein two inch and one inch) goat's hair hakes, to softly merge the colours. It's important that when you use these brushes that they are dry, as they become wet you need to use another dry brush. The wet brush will pick up too much paint and that will make the blending more difficult. For a small work like this I used about four brushes in this process; for larger works more brushes will be required. If necessary, wash out your existing brushes, let them dry, re-wet the paper and continue. It won't make any difference to the finished work if it is done over several hours, days, or weeks.

Step Four

Once the background is complete I attach the gridded drawing to the watercolour paper, using masking tape, but any sort of sticky tape will work.

Then I slide a sheet of white Saral Transfer paper underneath and trace the image onto the watercolour paper. That leaves me with a white outline of the subject, which I then fill in with white paint. I use a 50/50 mix of White Gouache and Atelier Matte Medium and Varnish, plus a few drop of water to make it easier to apply. It will probably be necessary to apply at least two to three coats to cover it properly, and results in a white silhouette of the subject. Once that is completely dry (usually

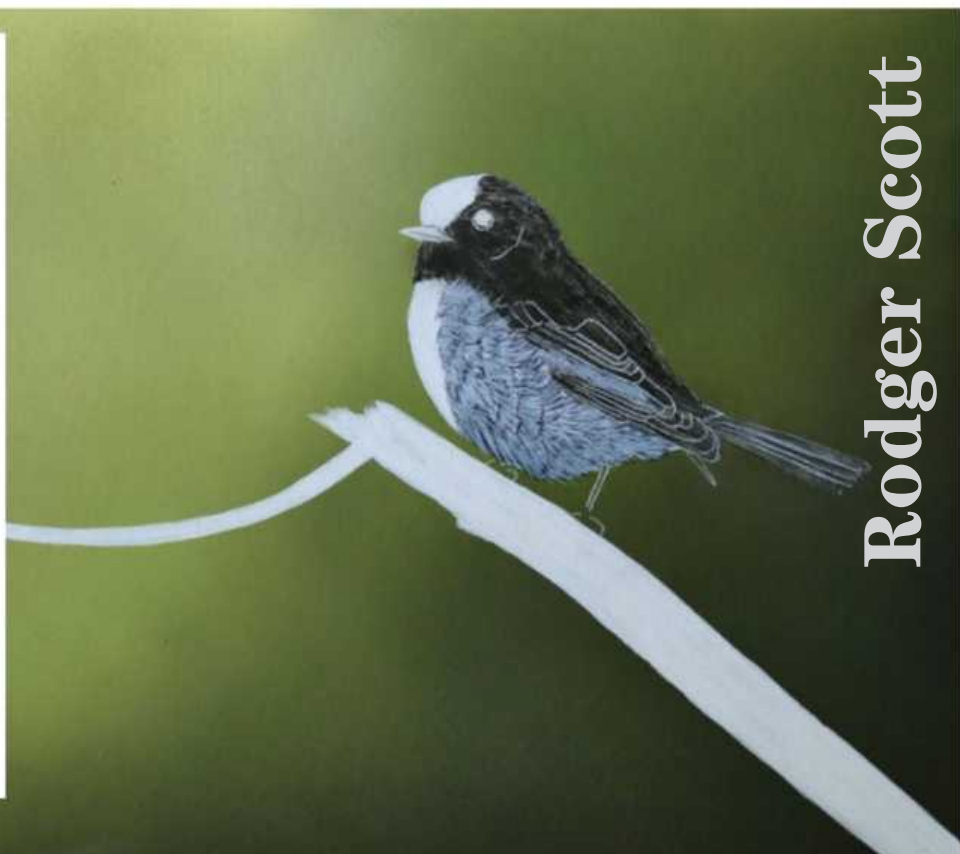


Step 6A



Step 6B

Step 6C



about 30 minutes), I then trace in the details using a sheet of black carbon paper.

Step Five

For this demonstration I am starting on the white part of the breast. First of all I painted the white areas with a diluted Neutral Tint (Holbein watercolour). Why would I cover a white area with a darker colour when it's going to be white when it's finished? Well, it's not going to be completely white when it's finished, and without the darker undercoat it's not possible to get any depth in that area.

To help create texture, I cross hatch the area with a Windsor and Newton series 7 #2 brush. Most of the painting will be painted with this brush. I splay the bristles in order to get a better appearance of texture.

After the cross hatching in Neutral Tint, I then go over the top of that using white, trying to preserve some of the darker colour underneath.

I continue to build up the area with successive coats of white paint.

Step Six

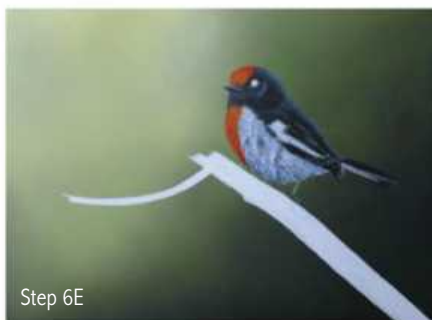
I then paint the black feather area with a light coat of black and build up that area with successive coats. Adding a lighter shade of grey on the back of the bird and parts of the head help give the bird shape.

I put white edging on some of the feathers. For the red cap and chest I used Vermillion.

The darker areas of the red were vermilion with black added. For the lighter areas I used orange and yellow. There is a general rule about gouache that if you want to darken your colour, add black or a darker colour, and if you want lighten it, add white. That won't work with red, because if you add white to red you get pink, so to avoid getting pink I used yellow and orange. >>



Step 6D



Step 6E



Step 6F



Step 7A



Step 7B

Step Seven

Time to do the eye. The eye is the most important part of the painting, because if the eye is not right then the entire painting won't look right either. For birds that have dark eyes, I paint the eye area black, when dry I add a little crescent of grey in the top of the eye and a smaller area on the bottom. To the top area I add a white highlight. The grey area at the bottom gets covered with Burnt Sienna. The bird is now finished, except for the legs, which I will finish off later.

Step Eight

Now I'll work on the branch. I wet the branch with water then add Holbein Sepia watercolour, making it darker on the bottom and lighter on the top.

I then "shape" the paint using a dry brush to move the paint around, so that a patterned texture starts to appear. I add some white to the upper side of the branch and blend it with the sepia.

The pattern is delineated with fine darker lines. To add a bit of reflective light, the bottom of the branch is coated with Burnt Sienna, which is then blended to the rest of the branch.

Step Nine

The painting needs foliage to make it look more complete. On a transparent sheet of acetate, I draw a number of leaves. I use acetate, as it allows me to see where the leaves go in relation to the bird and branch. I then copy the drawing on my photocopier



Step 8A



Step 8B



Step 9A



Step 9B



Step 9C



Step 9D

and trace the leaves on the painting using white transfer paper.

The leaves are painted with a mixture made up of Middle Green, Sepia, Sky Blue and White. I make three variations of this colour adding extra white to each one. That gives me three different colours from the same source, so they should work well together. The stems are painted with a mixture of Naples Yellow and White. I use my Windsor & Newton series & #2 brush for the main colours on the leaves. For the veins and edges, I use a Roymac 3550 Golden Sable 00 brush.

Step Ten

That completes that layer of leaves, but I want to add another layer over the top of that. To do that I use the same process of drawing on acetate laid over the painting.

When I'm happy with the new leaf arrangement, I photocopy the acetate and use that copy to transfer

the new layer of leaves to the painting. I want these leaves to come more to the front, so I under-paint them with white.

With the same greens that I mixed before I add another one using more white mixed with the green, so now instead of three green colours, I have four. The white under layer allows me to add some of the paint more thinly and allow the white to come through, which will help in bringing those leaves forward of the first leaf layer.

Final Step

To finish off, I add the legs and a layer of shadow under the bird. The shadow is important, as it helps anchor the bird to the branch.

You can see examples of my finished work on my web site www.rodgerscott.com.

The site also includes my biography, awards and contact details. ■



Step 10A



Step 10B

Peter Weibel – Media Rebel



Warning! This exposition can change your life.

In the late 1960s, the rejection of socio-political conservatism with its traditional gender and class-specific role models manifested itself in radical upheavals in the arts: unconventional thinkers began to break up and merge the hitherto strictly separated genres of art and architecture. The human body became the central medium and motif for performative and space-related forms of art that critically questioned the relationship between the individual and its surroundings, and tried to redefine it in a visionary way.

It was in this milieu and in the wake of the Vienna Group and Viennese Actionism that a young art and architecture scene emerged whose protagonists, in view of the innovations in society, science, and technology, advocated experimental and alternative forms of living and production.

Peter Weibel, who had been born in Odessa, was one of the bustling main figures of this scene in which artists no longer hid behind their works but made their appearance an integral part of a general concept in which actors and recipients could no longer be distinguished.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the artist, curator, and art theorist, who has been Director of the ZKM Center for Art and Media in Karlsruhe since 1999, was one of the rebels of that special Austrian kind whose attacks on the government combined





with streaks of absurdity and a Viennese mixture of applied psychoanalysis and Central Cemetery melancholy.

Weibel's activities are not characterised by an autobiographical signature but by thematic fields and problem areas like the mechanisms of perception and thinking, the eigenwelt of apparatuses, the crisis of representation, the picture and the museum, the relationship between art, politics and economy, and the conditions of the operating system of art. In the plurality of its methods and the coherent presentation of problems, his oeuvre unfolds, in a radical vein of great rarity, new concepts of what a work and an artist is and has not only influenced many artists to date but will continue to do so in the twenty-first century.

*The exhibition was at
Belvedere Vienna
Web: www.belvedere.at*



Gallery

The Prank

Images

This page
The Journey, 2015,
acrylic on canvas &
pastel, oil, paper,
140 x 300cm

Opposite page
Secret Message, 2015,
acrylic on canvas,
230 x 190cm

"The Prank" is a solo exhibition focusing on the creative process of the artist as he explores some philosophical questions in his work. Wael Darwesh creates preliminary drawings where he plays with lines, colours, and geometric forms, moving on to what become semi-abstract paintings constructed from his mind.

Growing up in a family of artists, Wael Darwesh's father graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in 1961 and he was director of the Department of Fine Art & Books Printing in one of oldest and most well-known daily newspapers in the Middle East, the Al-Ahram newspaper. At home, the walls of their house were filled with his collection of paintings. There was a large library with all publications of Al-Ahram, and a house full of all kinds of fine art materials, colours and papers with which to practice drawing and colouring. During my childhood I was always drawing and painting, and whenever I finished one of my paintings, I gave it as gift to my friends. I ended up participating in many school shows.

In his own words: I was born in the province of Giza in 1975 and my family was from southern Egypt, the Qena province, about 600km from Cairo, near of the province of Luxor. My high results in philosophy and social studies and my artistic potential led me to the Faculty of Art Education.

Thanks to my outstanding results, I was appointed in 1998 as Teaching Assistant for Drawing & Painting, and selected for the Master Degree from 1998 to 2003 that led to my Doctorate in 2008, which granted me the position of Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Art Education at Helwan University.

At my final year of the Faculty of Art Education, I exhibited in the Hall, and as soon I graduated, the Arts Center in Cairo in 2002 proposed my first exhibition with a portfolio of 64 paintings.

"The Prank" is the exploration that each individual - not society or religion - is solely responsible for giving meaning to life and living it passionately and sincerely. The Existentialism, the search for the meaning of happiness in our human and daily lives and the constant questioning if life is really worth living, has been permanently recurrent in my works.

Should we consider life "spontaneously", as it comes? Or there is it some kind of a mirage with instantaneous pleasures that will fade quickly? We are always standing in the middle of the road trying to ascertain where the truth is. We may compromise to reach halfway and end with incomplete dreams.

The message that I want to achieve in my career through my art is my very personal vision of my surroundings and events and things through a



different lens. I aim to develop new techniques for my expression of my art where I'm submerged by its paradoxes; I'm always searching for the meaning of absolute beauty, looking for my comfort and my satisfaction. My statement is that we are all on a journey carrying a set of relationships and always standing the middle of the truth; choose the half-solution, dream a half dream and look for a half hope.

When deciding what to feature in an exhibition, I firstly decide the basic and main idea that I will be developing in my new body of works; generally it's linked to circumstances of my daily reality. Emotional honesty and sincerity are very important parts in my artistic expression. The large collection of the paintings will hold the different interpretations and variations of the main idea. The process begins with my sketches illustrating my ideas that evolve in my mind permanently until I reach the best expression and composition. It is like an explosion in the canvas where I leave the emotions operate freely to achieve a total freedom in my emotions, which leads secondly to mathematical and colour configurations settings. I finalise by using lines to achieve the colour transparencies.

On the personal side I usually work by seeking to develop the technical and the stylistic of



artistic techniques as well the conceptual idea itself.

The Prank was featured by Artsawa earlier this year.

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Gallery

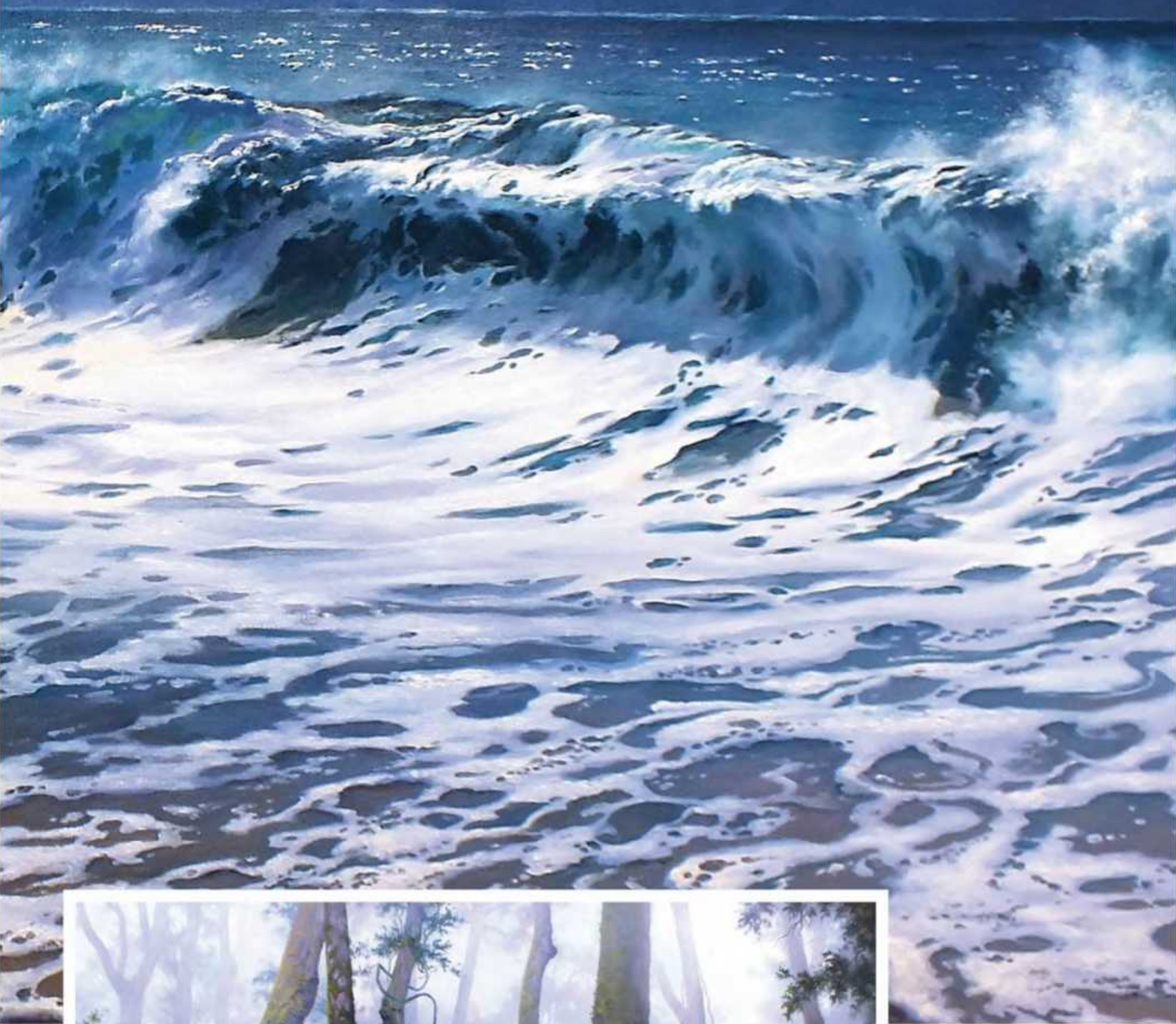
Some form of addiction . . .

Offering sage advice to would-be professionals, this artist believes in believing in yourself – because ‘when you value you, the world values you’.

I first began painting in the early 1970s – a great time for emerging artists. I had just returned to Australia after spending 10 years of my youth in England with my mother and stepfather. I had a baby and young child, and was looking for some form of work that could be done from home. So when I was reunited with my natural father after my 10 year absence it was fascinating to find that he had become a professional artist and was making a good living out of his art. He was very well known in the ‘70s – ‘80s, and living a rather exotic lifestyle on his

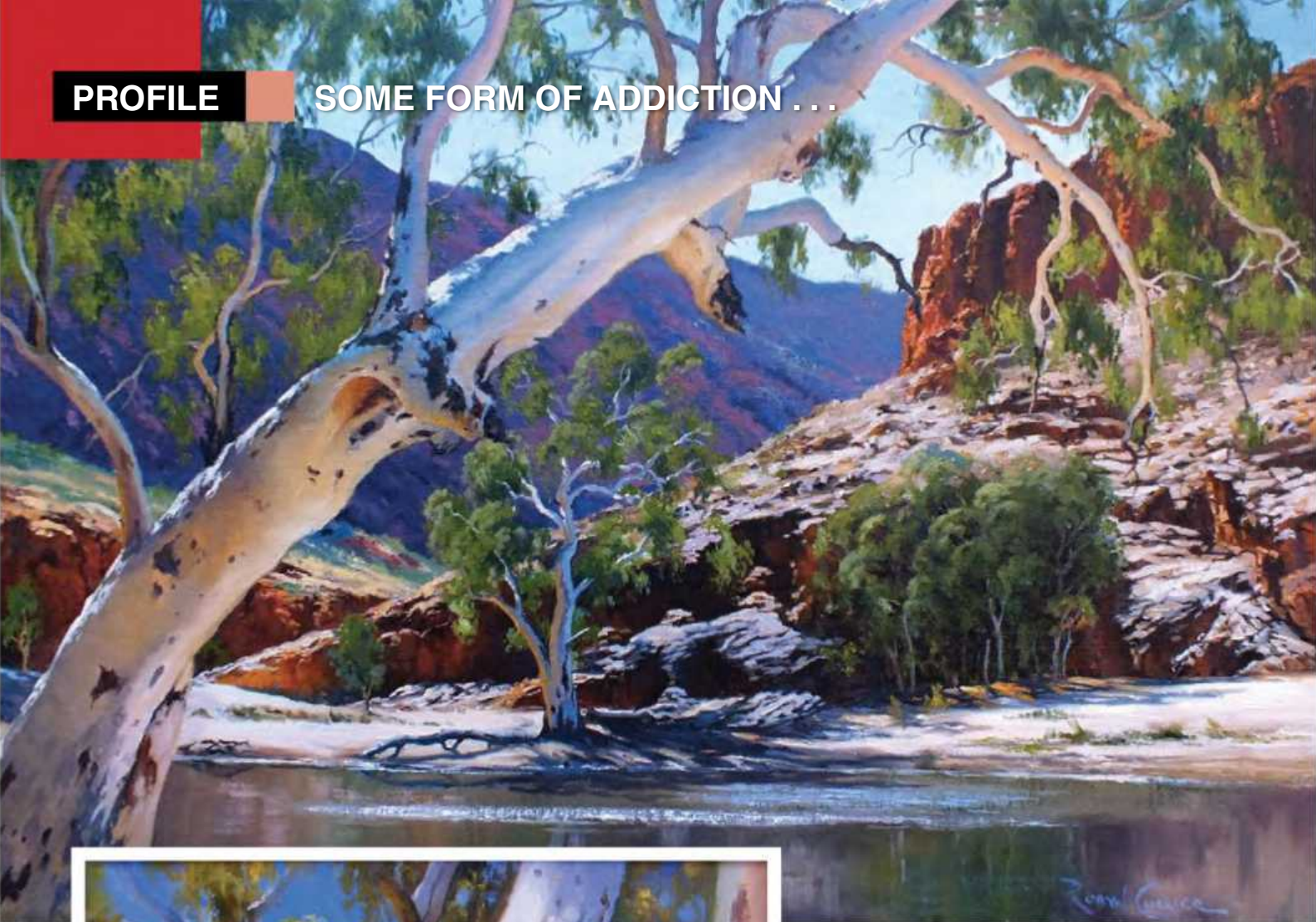
boat, moored in Sydney harbour.

Coincidentally, at around the same time, I met a young woman who was also painting and selling her work and we became friends. I was excited by the potential for earning a bit of money and highly motivated to give it a go – having done well in art at school. I entered my first art show and sold several paintings. I was hooked. After a short amount of time the desire for sales turned into a desire to paint good art, and I have hardly put a brush down since. It is my firm belief that in order to do well a painter >>



Paintings

Above: Storm Surge
Left: Forest Mists



has to have some element of addiction to the craft. I know for sure that I have. It is always about the next painting – never the last.

It was fortunate that I made my name and became established as a painter in those good times. Landscape painting was popular, galleries were booming and there were plenty around. Although coping with many rejections and many failed paintings, I was highly motivated and determined. Eventually, I succeeded in entering the Sydney gallery scene, exhibiting in Geo Styles Gallery in Sydney, Swains bookstore and Prouds Gallery – all now long gone.

I had no formal training as an artist but learnt through failure, hard work and observation, grasping opportunities as they arose. I suppose I like to call myself an intuitive artist. Failure has been more common than success, but the drive to produce better paintings has always propelled me forward.

One of the greatest opportunities I grasped was painting in the beautiful Burragorang Valley—part of the catchment area for Sydney's water supply. Access was very restricted and I was fortunate enough to be one of the few allowed in to paint it. Through this I learned to relish painting areas that most other artists did not venture into. As a natural



Paintings

This page

Above: Drowned Valley

Top right: Mick's Creek

Right: Nambucca Inlet

Opposite page

Top: Ormiston Gorge

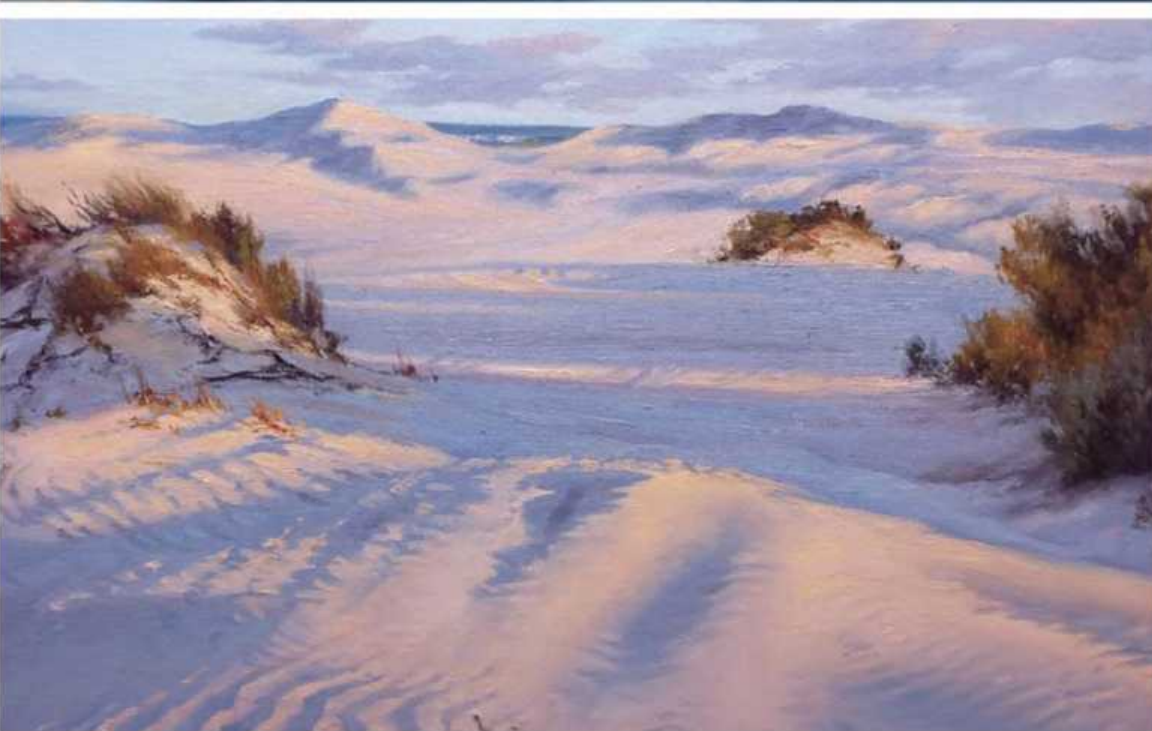
Waterhole

Bottom: Eucalypts

progression, I began to bushwalk, taking longer walks into more remote areas such as camping overnight on top of Mt Solitary and in the Blue Gum Forest. I loved the challenge of finding these areas of great natural beauty. During these treks my camera became my friend, as carrying painting gear was far too heavy and difficult for most of the walks I was doing.

Gradually my career as a visual artist was growing, and I was becoming known for painting Australia's wild places. I began to travel extensively around Australia and was drawn to the coast where I still create many of my paintings. I never tire of the ocean or the rolling dunes that stand guard so majestically. No wave is ever the same, each day so different.

Studio work can have a dampening effect on inspiration if time is not taken to recharge through the natural world. My love of walking takes me to some beautiful and special places and there is nothing I enjoy more than recreating these places on canvas – making changes to improve >>



Robyn Collier

composition and mood, but always keeping the essence of the place accurate.

My camera is still an essential tool in the challenge to achieve the results I now desire, although there are many pitfalls for the unwary. It is wonderful to grasp those special fleeting moments now that only a camera can capture as I become more adept at translating them on to canvas. It is exciting to paint the more difficult and intimate subjects I choose – particularly within the element of water. I am always mindful that it is a painting I am creating and rarely rely on a photograph alone. A good photograph is a wonderful aid but not the end result.

Having dabbled in various mediums in the past, I now paint only in oils. I love the buttery texture and the blending capacity of oil paints, but have moved away from turps and dangerous solvents which are now totally unnecessary. The luscious smell of oil is still present in my studio but that is

all. My painting technique is called Alla Prima – or interpreted 'first attempt'. It is also referred to as wet-in-wet technique. If my board is too large, or subject too complex to finish in one sitting, I will work on a section of it while still wet, then continue to the next section when I can resume. It is only at the very end I will touch up a dry painting. I find that working wet can lead to a softer, but more professional look.

Many people ask me what it takes to become a successful painter. It is a hard question to answer because it all depends on how you qualify success. But to earn a living from art means embracing a certain degree of obsession, 'brush miles', and grasping opportunities as they arise. It takes time to develop a 'style', but with constant dedication to your art that will come. I also feel that these days it is important to produce a different angle to your painting – something that is easily recognised as



yours and be willing to move, grow and adapt to changing circumstances.

It is important to get paintings out and about – the more people who see your name the better. But with more competition there are also more opportunities. Social media and the Internet offer greater opportunity for sales than ever before. Learning techniques from other artists is now huge and beneficial – something that was not so available when I first started out on my painting adventure! Above all, if you want to earn a living from your art, hold fast to a solid belief in yourself – letting nothing eat away at that belief. The outer world is a reflection of your inner world. When you value you – the world values you.

For the past 11 years I have also found fulfilment in conducting workshops around Australia – a direction I am enjoying and finding most uplifting. Painting for my galleries and my own satisfaction will always be my first love, but I feel happy in

imparting knowledge to others who are also enjoying the journey of art – something that has enriched my life beyond anything I thought possible.

I now have the privilege of having been a professional artist for more than 40 years and still love every minute of my work. I have had to embrace many changes – technology, social media, and smart phones, plus changing needs and closing galleries. We all have to move forward. But one thing I will not do is compromise my own beliefs. Staying true to yourself is intrinsically a large part of success.

Galleries:

Lost Bear Gallery – 2 April - 26 April 2016.

Lurline St – Katoomba, NSW

Gallery Beneath, Sirroco Plaza – Mooloolaba, Qld

Stirling Fine Art – WA

Web: www.robyncollier.com.au For subscription to monthly newsletter go to home page of web site. ■

Paintings

This page

Above: On The Track To Butterbox Point

Opposite page

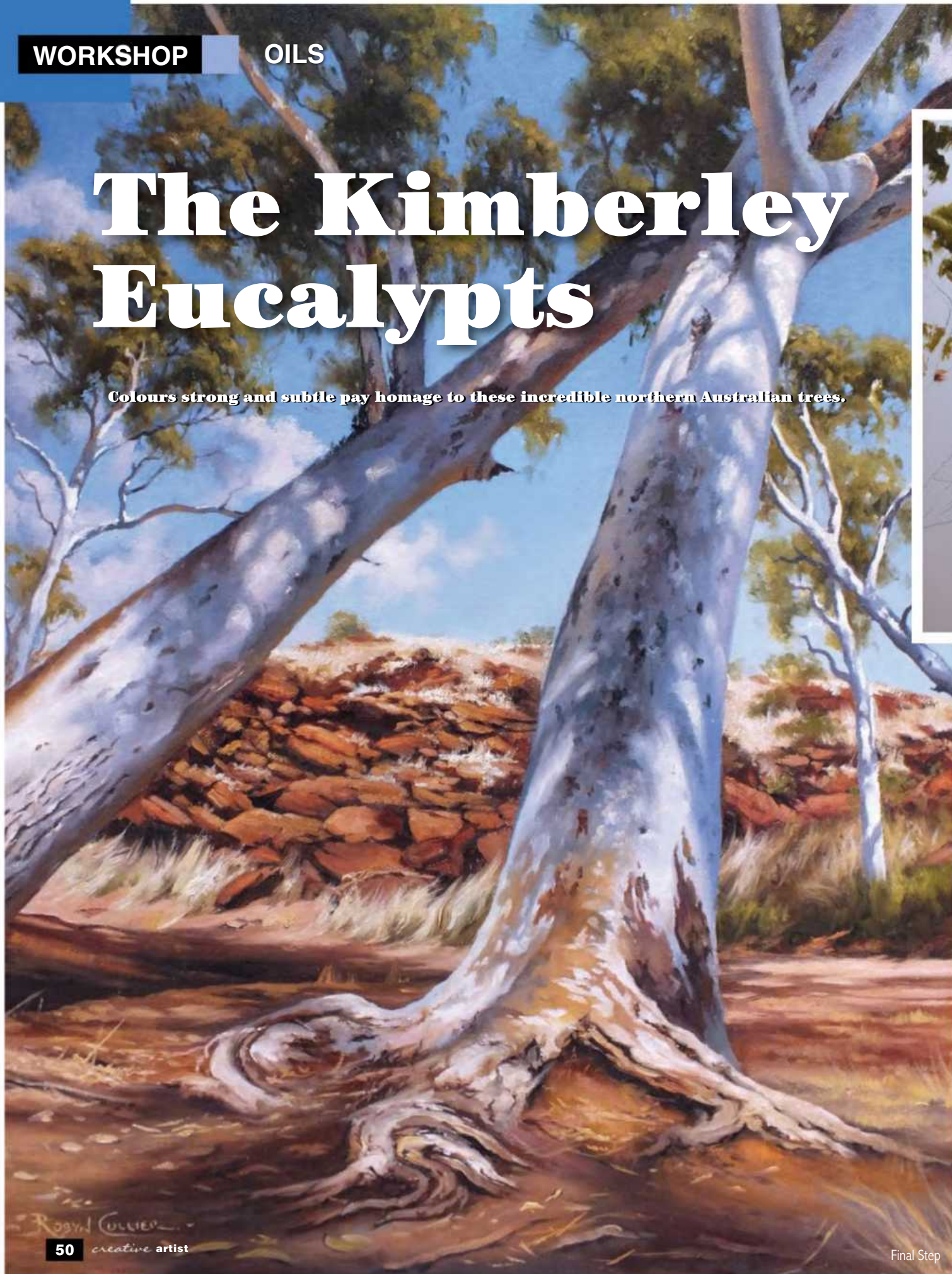
Top left: Moonglow

Bottom left: Pastel

Dunes Wedge Island

The Kimberley Eucalypts

Colours strong and subtle pay homage to these incredible northern Australian trees.



Robyn Collier



Step 1



Step 2

Step One

Firstly I draw in my subject with accuracy but no detail. I use thin willow charcoal because it is easy to rub out. Pencil is difficult to remove and painting directly on to the canvas often means a messy drawing with correction lines. The board I chose is a 51 x 61cm, which I felt suited the subject matter of the Kimberley Eucalypts.

I always begin by blocking in my darks, then mid-tones, then lastly my lights. If I am working on a section of the painting as I am with this one, then the darks of that section go in first. In this case it is the foliage and the darks of the rocks. I have decided to work from the background and the top section of the painting first.

Using a mixture of Sap Green and Burnt Sienna, I block in the foliage, rubbing the edges with a rag so it softens them and also helps keep colours clean when I paint my sky back into the foliage.

I then use my dark mix – Burnt Sienna and Blue Black – to define the shadows in the rocks. Using a mix of Transparent Red Oxide (Art Spectrum,) I then block in the mid tones, giving a warm base. At this stage I have used a rag again to rub out some of the mid tones, giving a natural rock-like texture. It gives me a good base to start forming the rocks in more

detail and allows some of the translucent colour to come through.

Step Two

I want to work my way down the board. This way I can better judge the tonal value of the shadows in the trees.

At this stage I have put in my basic sky (Titanium White, Ultramarine Blue, Manganese Blue and a touch of Blue Black), brushing it into the softened edges of the foliage but being careful not to pick up any green. If you do pick up green, wipe your brush or you will end up with a muddy sky. Pay attention to keeping the lower sky a lighter tone than the sky at the top of the board. I then applied a few highlights to the foliage using Sap Green, Australian Red Gold and Cadmium Yellow in various shades. It is important to remember that all greens are not the same and you need variety of colour in your painting. I am always working one edge into the other – the sky into the foliage then the foliage back into the sky.

Having now established where my tonal value sits, I can begin to paint in my tree trunks – starting with my darks. The shadows in the tree are a variety of colours, so I am using mixtures of Titanium White, Blue Black, Ultramarine Blue, Burnt Sienna, >>

Materials List

- 51 x 61cm good quality canvas board. Quality canvas is essential. As you do not want a board that is not well primed and sucks the life out of the paint – nor one that is too slippery.
- Art Basics 101 Flat Bristle in all sizes
 - Eterna 579 (a cheap 'hairy bristle but useful for some effects and softening edges)
 - Monte Marte 'Rake' brush - great for grass
 - Art Basics Bristle – round 1 & 2
 - Eterna 582 Bristle round
 - I also cut my own brushes with sharp scissors using old brushes I no longer use. These are great for a variety of uses where texture is required.
- Thin willow charcoal
- Colours
 - Art Spectrum Australian Red Gold
 - Art Spectrum Pilbara Red
 - Art Spectrum Cadmium Yellow
 - Art Spectrum Ultramarine Blue
 - Art Spectrum Manganese Blue
 - Art Spectrum Burnt Sienna
 - Art Spectrum Transparent Red Oxide
 - Winsor & Newton Blue Black
 - Schminke Titanium White
 - Sap green
- Medium: Gamsol solvent - one of the safest solvents to use. All the aromatic solvents have been refined out of it, making it safer than any of the aromatic petroleum solvents. It also has a very high flash point.

Continued...



Step 3



Step 3 – Detail

Materials List

Continued...

- **Brush Clean-up:** Cheap baby oil in a container with a grid to allow for pressing the paint out of the brush. Baby oil is conditioning on the brushes and with a basic clean they will stay okay for a couple of days. About once every four days I will give them a good clean with brush cleaner or washing up detergent. A word of warning – it is important to make sure that you wipe the oil out of the brush well before you use it.



Australian Red Gold and a touch of Pilbara Red. Pilbara Red and Blue Black can make a beautiful soft mauve if mixed with care.

Once my shadows on the trunks are established I then carefully brushed in my highlights. For the trunk highlights I have used a mixture of White, Australian Red Gold and Pilbara Red.

Step Three

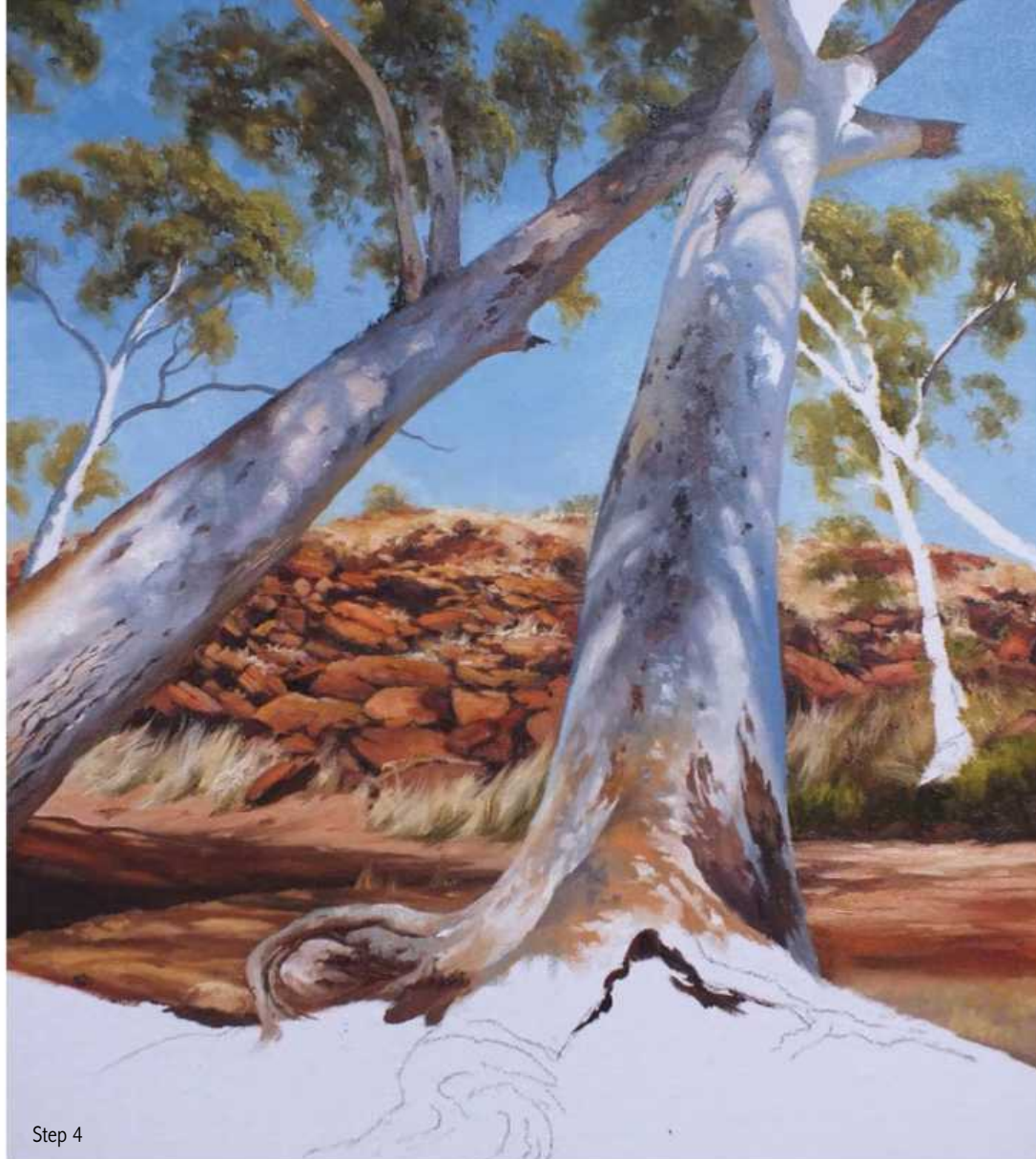
Using the same technique, I can now begin on the next tree trunk. There are a lot of darker patches of bark on this trunk which I need to pay attention to. Observation of the smaller things is critical in producing a painting that is convincing. Also notice the small blush of reflected light on the left of the tree towards the top.

Step Four

I have now blocked in the darker bark at the base of the tree – paying attention to where the sun is just hitting it and varying the tone. My colours are again Blue Black – Burnt Sienna – Australian Red Gold and a touch of White. I have also added more detail to the shadow area of the trunk. Then I continued on

Artist's Hints & Tips

- When you mix your colours, always mix a good amount of paint. Remixing colours in the middle of a critical part of your painting is annoying and often ends up leading to a different colour to the original. The other temptation is to thin the paint with too much medium to make it go further.
- Be aware of repetition in your painting and avoid it i.e. painting a row of trees or rocks that all look the same.
- Use a large palette. Running out of room when mixing colours can lead to a muddy painting. It can also be frustrating when you have to clean your palette mid-painting. It is easy and cheap to buy a laminated board from the hardware store and cut it to size. You can then mix on the white laminated side.
- If you are mixing a dark colour, start with the dark paint and the light to it. When mixing a light colour, start with the lightest colour and add the dark. This helps avoid giant mounds of paint!
- Don't focus too intently on the early stages of your work. Keep in mind the big picture. It is too easy to fiddle at this stage and overwork your painting. The time for final touches is at the end when all the board is covered.



Step 4

from the rocks down, blocking in some dried grasses and beginning the darks of the red earth.

Step Five and Final Step

Having formed the curved root at the base of the tree, I have continued through the background – coming forward with my light and shade. Again the colours are the same, Blue Black and Burnt Sienna with a touch of Pilbara Red and White for the earth colour in shadow and Australian Red Gold, Burnt Sienna, a touch of White for the sunnier areas. I have also added some Yellow Ochre here. I have painted in a few rocks and sticks to add interest and added a bit more detail to the dried grass at the base of the rock face. At this stage I have also gone on to finalise the background trees, painting in the light and shade of the trunks (Blue Black and White and Australian Red Gold and White), reforming the foliage.

The final touches are a lot easier to do when the painting has dried, and it is only at this stage that I will do the last of the touch-ups, making sure that everything looks in balance with lights and shadows.

At the last minute I added a bit more shadow on to the twisted root, and part of the foliage. I also want to make sure that I have reflected light where I need it to be, such as the branch at the top of the painting and the underside of the left hand tree. You may also notice that I have painted in a few wispy clouds just to break up the solid blue sky. At this stage ideally I will leave it for a couple of weeks where I can see the painting – what I like to call 'living with it'. It is surprising what can jump out at you over a period of time. Some future changes can often be so subtle you can barely notice them, but can make a big difference to the feel and the look of the painting.

Galleries:

Lost Bear Gallery - 2 April - 26 April 2016.–

Lurline St – Katoomba, NSW

Gallery Beneath, Sirroco Plaza – Mooloolaba, Qld
Stirling Fine Art – WA

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Workshops quoted by request.

10 Top Buys – Flashguns and Light

Flash photography has never been easier with these top 10 buys. Whether you are using a flashgun to supply artificial light to a dark setting or a flash unit to provide softer, controlled lighting, these buys are perfect for achieving a professional result:

Hahnel Universal Flash Accessory Kit for Speedlites \$97.00

From beginners through to professionals, no photography enthusiast is complete without a flash accessory kit. The Hahnel Universal Flash kit is ideal for anyone wanting to create professional looking images through a variety of creative effects. The kit contains six different light diffusion accessories including a honeycomb diffuser, flash reflector diffuser, softbox, flash colour effect filter kit, foldable light beam shoot and flash bracket and umbrella stand bracket. Each modifier attaches to your flash head using a versatile Velcro-style system which ensures maximum compatibility with a variety of flashguns.

www.digitalcamerawarehouse.com.au/prod12201.htm

Canon Speedlite 320EX Flash \$299.95

Designed for DSLR owners who want to use creative lighting techniques,

the Canon Speedlite 320EX is ideal for experimenting with different light settings and offers greater flexibility for lighting control. The standout feature is the tilt and swivel flash head which allows for a more powerful flash, while a faster recycle time means you won't be waiting as long between photos. Included with the unit is a Canon flash shoe stand and padded nylon pouch, offering convenient storage and transport. Complete with an LED video light, the unit is compatible with all recent Canon DSLRs and is perfect for photographers of any level.

www.teds.com.au/canon-speedlite-320ex-flash-with-led-light

Olympus Pen Mal-1 Macro Arm Light \$99.95

A lighting accessory designed to illuminate small objects, the Olympus Macro Arm Light utilises two small but powerful LED lights in two intensities so you can determine the level of lighting



Hahnel Universal Flash Accessory Kit for Speedlites \$97.00



Canon Speedlite 320EX Flash \$299.95



Metz 20C-2 Flashgun \$79.95



Canon ST-E3 Flash Radio Transmitter \$379.00

Olympus Pen Mal-1 Macro Arm Light \$99.95

needed and create a series of different 'modelling' effects. The LEDs can also be independently turned on or off, which is an added bonus. The movable arms mean that the lights can be positioned in a specific way and highlight delicate features. The unit is compatible with any Pen camera with an accessory port and is ideal for beginner photographers wanting to expand their skills.

www.teds.com.au/olympus-pen-mal-1-macro-arm-light

Metz 20C-2 Flashgun \$79.95

One for beginners or those who have taken up photography as a hobby, the Metz 20C-2 Flashgun is perfect for anyone wanting additional lighting beyond the integrated camera flash. Currently the smallest compact flash unit from Metz, the convenient unit features two automatic apertures and a swivel reflector whilst being compact enough to fit in your pocket. An LED display on the back of the unit provides information about the flash readiness and correct exposure to ensure your shot is faultless every time.

www.teds.com.au/metz-20c-2-flashgun

Canon ST-E3 Flash Radio Transmitter \$379.00

Representing the next generation in wireless flash setups, this Canon Flash Radio Transmitter facilitates radio controlled, two-way wireless transmission up to 29.97m among up to five groups or fifteen individual Speedlites. The radio-frequency

flash trigger is aimed at professional photographers using off-camera flash over distances of up to 30m and provides reliable operation, ideally when direct line of sight is not possible. Highlights of the Flash Radio Transmitter include diverse flash metering options and a number of modes which make complex lighting setups simple. The compact, easy-to-use, high quality transmitter is a reliable tool for any advanced photographer wanting to master flash photography.

<https://store.canon.com.au/our-products/accessories/speedlites/speedlite%20body%20accessories/st-e3-rt>

Elinchrom D-Lite ONE To Go Twin Strobe Umbrella Kit \$664.00

Expand your lighting configuration options and get creative with this Elinchrom kit. The ideal starting platform for anyone looking to step up their flash photography skills, the kit features two D-Lite RX ONE strobes, an EL-Skyport Speed Wireless Transmitter, two 2.7m light stands, a 85cm Pro White Umbrella, a 83cm Eco Translucent Umbrella, a 16cm reflector, a sync cable, two protective strobe caps and two carry cases for storage and transportation. Benefits of the kit include the elimination of messy sync cables, making the kit convenient and easy to set up, and the ability to produce soft, high quality light, allowing the photographer to achieve professional, high quality results every time.

www.digitalcamerawarehouse.com.au/prod9810.htm >>



Elinchrom D-Lite ONE To Go Twin Strobe Umbrella Kit \$664.00



Metz 15 MC-1 Wireless Digital
Flash Ring \$139.00



ProMaster LED 120 Camera
Light Flash \$99.00



Stofen Omni Bounce from \$29.95

Metz 15 MC-1 Wireless Digital Flash Ring \$139.00

By creating balanced and precise illumination, the Digital Flash Ring by Metz is ideal for macro photography. With the assistance of individually controlled reflectors between 0°–20°, the precision light distribution creates effective light accents and minimises shadows regardless of the subject. With a range of features including six partial light output settings, wireless TTL and a dot-matrix display, the unit is ideal for anyone wanting to ensure their close ups are of the highest quality.

[www.camerahouse.com.au/
products/Flashguns/Metz-15-MS-1-
Wireless-Digital-Flash-Ring.aspx](http://www.camerahouse.com.au/products/Flashguns/Metz-15-MS-1-Wireless-Digital-Flash-Ring.aspx)

ProMaster LED 120 Camera Light Flash \$99.00

Trying to create the perfect setting can be a challenge, but the ProMaster LED Camera Light unit is designed to help you achieve well-lit photographs with a natural colour. The continuous light source eliminates any red-eye effect caused by the flash and guarantees a sharper picture by providing a good source of illumination for your cameras auto focus. A must have accessory for any level photographer looking to enhance their images with a natural look.

[www.camerahouse.com.au/products/
Flashgun-Accessories/ProMaster-
LED120-CameraCamcorder-Light-
Flash.aspx](http://www.camerahouse.com.au/products/Flashgun-Accessories/ProMaster-LED120-CameraCamcorder-Light-Flash.aspx)

Stofen Omni Bounce from \$29.95

An affordable investment which provides even coverage across an entire frame, the

Stefan Omni Bounce range is available for most camera models and is easy to use and custom fitting. The product outputs light in all directions to bounce the flash and is particularly good for wide angle and macro photography. Designed for years of service and without the bulk of other diffusers on the market, the Omni Bounce is convenient and can be stored in your gadget bag or pocket. Ensure you have this accessory on hand next time you shoot.

[www.teds.com.au/accessories/flash-
guns-video-lights?p=5](http://www.teds.com.au/accessories/flash-guns-video-lights?p=5)

Gary Fong Lightsphere Collapsible Portrait Lighting Kit \$190.00

Designed with efficiency and portability in mind, this kit is a must have if you want to enhance the quality of on-location portrait sessions. The kit contains essentials such as a collapsible speed mount and speed snoot which allows photographers to securely attach and switch out modifiers in seconds as well as providing an equally tight fit for nearly all flash sizes. Depending on the effect you want to achieve there are a number of Domes included. The WhiteDome serves as a multi-purpose tool to gauge light for in-camera white balancing; the AmberDome instantly warms photos in cool lighting situations and the GaryDome serves as a tool to capture and measure reflective light and is used for setting a custom white balance in post-processing.

[www.camerahouse.com.au/
products/Flashgun-Accessories/
Gary-Fong-Lightsphere-Collapsible-
Portrait-Lighting-Kit.aspx](http://www.camerahouse.com.au/products/Flashgun-Accessories/Gary-Fong-Lightsphere-Collapsible-Portrait-Lighting-Kit.aspx)



Gary Fong Lightsphere
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My New World

Paintings

This page: Byron Bay

Opposite page

Top: Elephant Rock
Currumbin

Middle: Dunes

Bottom: Though

Poppies Still Grow

I grew up in country Victoria. I think I was born to create, and as a child I was passionate about anything with a creative aspect. I particularly had a love for drawing, and spent many hours drawing caricatures. I went on to study art in high school, which was primarily art history and appreciation. Unfortunately, my art teacher was a substitute and really had no creative interest in the students and as a result my attempts at painting were not encouraged.

I moved on to the real world, training as a nurse. I continued my creative journey through craft pursuits such as knitting and sewing, and even

sugar art and cake decorating, which my mother taught me. I married in 1980 and had two children and it was during this time that I also joined the Australian Army Reserve and volunteered with the State Emergency Service. In 1995 we moved to Queensland. I started work in the public service and also undertook tertiary studies, completing an undergraduate degree in Criminology and a Masters in Ethics and Legal Studies.

It wasn't until after my children had grown that I returned to my first love of drawing. It was only a couple of years later during the Brisbane 2011 floods when we were stranded that I decided to



Living amongst pristine scenery in south east Queensland, this artist is spoilt for choice when deciding what to paint.

try my hand at painting again. Since that day I haven't stopped. Encouraged by my mother, who is a talented pastelist, and my wonderful husband, and inspired by amazing artists such as Mark Waller and Robyn Collier, I now paint at every waking opportunity.

My love of the sea is predominant in my paintings, with seascapes being my passion, although I do explore other subject matter from time to time. Due to my ties to the military recently I felt compelled to reflect my thoughts in a series of paintings dedicated to the 100 year commemorations of the ANZAC legend. >>





I now live in the beautiful scenic rim of south east Queensland, an area which has amazing scenery and fabulous weather, and is home to many talented artists. The most incredible thing about painting is that it has opened up a new world of wonder for me; I now see everything from a new and wonderful perspective. I now see shapes and colours around me that I never knew existed and every day there are new, wonderful discoveries.

I am also an avid photographer and as a result I have collected hundreds of reference photos when travelling to amazing locations in our great country.

It is only in recent times that I have commenced entering my work in exhibitions, and while they are slow steps, they have been positive ones. I won the Chroma Artist of the Year Judge's Choice for April 2014, and had one of my ANZAC commemorative paintings chosen as a finalist in the Lethbridge 10000 small scale art awards. I also recently exhibited at the Darcy Doyle Art Awards 2015.

I am very excited to be exhibiting internationally in the Kangaroo visits Rome Exhibition at the Via Guilia Gallery, Rome from 26 - 29 November 2015.

You can visit my website at www.sandilangridgeart.com for information on my paintings and how to commission an artwork, connect with me through my Facebook page www.facebook.com/sandilangridgeartist.com.au or email me at sandilangridgeart@gmail.com ■

Paintings

Above: Rocks and Feathers

Top left: Ularu

Left: Kingscliff

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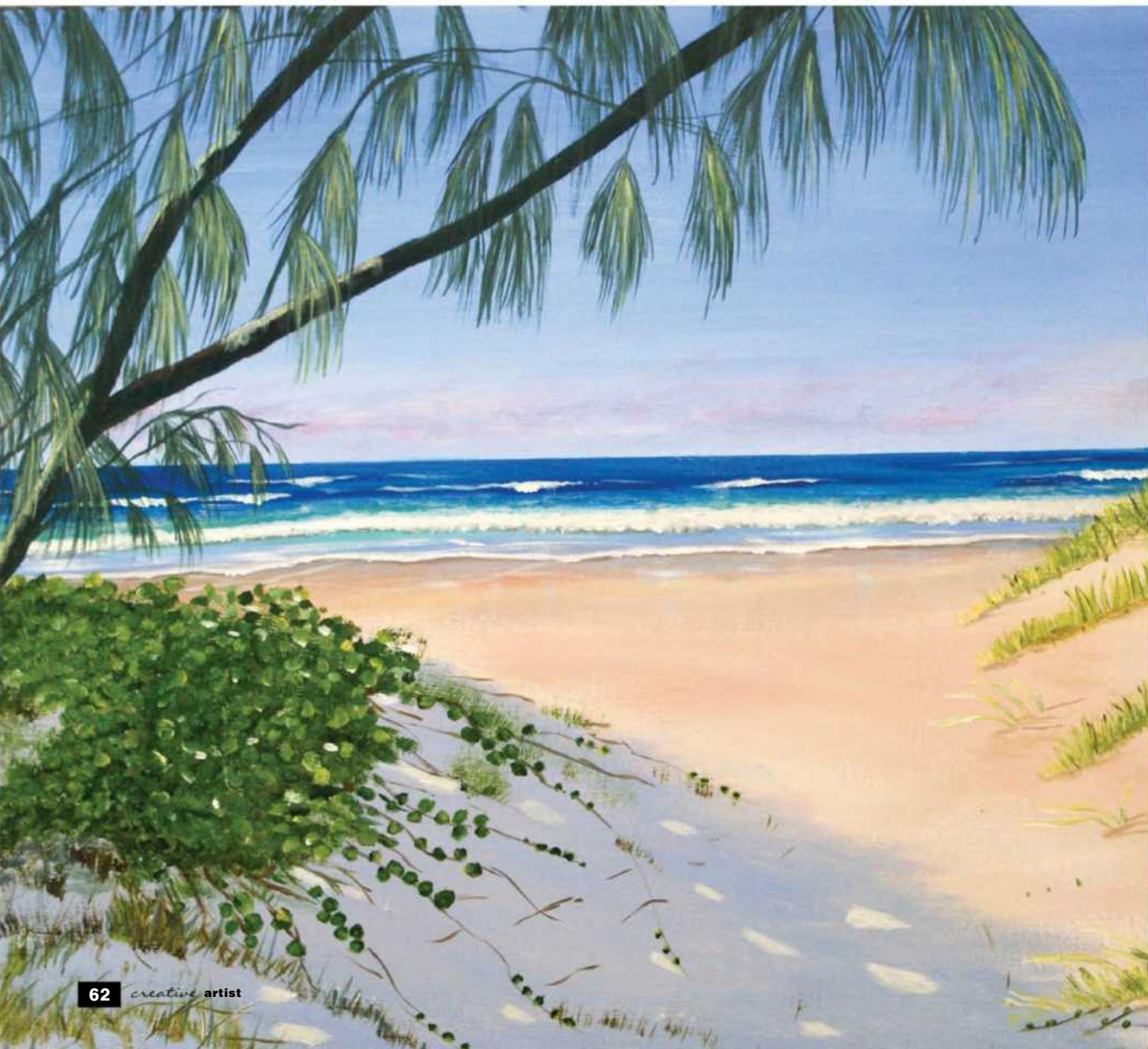
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Artist's
Palette

Cooloola Beach Breeze

It's easy to see that the artist feels at home in this environment, and the painting gives justice to the incredible beauty of the National Park.



Materials List

- Paints – Atelier interactive
 - Ultramarine Blue
 - Phthalo Blue
 - Prussian Blue
 - Cadmium Yellow Light
 - Cadmium Yellow Medium
 - Permanent Alizarine
 - Dioxazine Purple
 - Burnt Umber
 - Forest Green
 - Titanium White
- Mediums
 - Atelier Retarder Medium
 - Impasto Gel
 - Atelier Clear Painting Medium (for glazing)
 - Atelier Gloss Varnish
- Brushes: My favourite brush is the flat chisel. Sizes range from #2 through to #12 with most work.



Final Step



Step 1

Step One

My selected reference photo is one I took while camping at the Cooloola Beach National Park just north of Noosa in Queensland. I start by applying two coats of gesso with a 1/4 inch flat brush. I mark in the horizon line with masking tape. I mix Ultramarine Blue, Phthalo Blue and White, and, starting at the top, I work down through the sky - adding White and Ultramarine Blue, ensuring the sky is lighter toward the horizon line. I then mix a little Dioxazine Purple, White and Ultramarine Blue, which results in a very pale mauve colour which is muddled on the horizon line.

The water is then blocked in using Phthalo Blue, a touch of Prussian Blue, blending in White and



Step 2



Step 3



Artist's hints & tips

- Block in whatever you can to give you a sense of composition and balance.
- I use a limited palette as I like to mix my colours. Atelier Interactive mediums and paints have great properties which allow you to rework.
- I like to give my canvas a couple of coats of gesso, and in some cases I like to add a warm under paint.
- I always make sure my horizon line is straight by using masking tape.
- I like to have my reference photo on a computer or tablet. It backlights the images and shows the true colours, whereas a printed reference photo is often not reflective of the true light and colour from the original scene that captured your imagination.
- I use glazing a lot in my work; it gives you the ability to make subtle changes to colours and can give you a fine translucent finish.
- I also use impasto gels in my seascapes as it gives depth and texture.

Cadmium Yellow as I move toward the beach. Finally I mix a touch of Ultramarine Blue and White to represent the damp shore line. Moving forward I block in the sand by mixing White, Burnt Umber, Cadmium Yellow, and a tiny touch of Alizarine.

Step Two

Now that the base is blocked in I move on to add some detail to the water using a blend of Phthalo Blue, White and Cadmium Yellow to paint a representation of the waves. Once this is done I add the white wash to the shore line with a small brush, and wave caps where the surf has rolled over. I will need to re-establish the white wash at a later stage.

Step Three

I now block in the sand dunes using White, Burnt Umber, Cadmium Yellow and a touch of Alizarine. I shape the dunes to ensure that my composition is correct and balanced and I mark in the tree on the left hand side using Burnt Umber and White.

Step Four

I now use a thin Burnt Umber mix to paint in the stems of beach grasses along the dunes. I use a mix



Step 3

Step 4

of Burnt Umber, Ultramarine Blue, Cadmium Yellow and White to which I gradually add more yellow to add highlights and tones to give the grass some depth.

I then commence painting the creeper using Forest Green, a touch of Alizarin, and some Cadmium Yellow to lighten. This green colour is dabbed in random bunches.

After mixing more Cadmium Yellow, additional lighter leaves are painted in, and the green is used in the same way as the Burnt Umber to create the runners. The leaves are painted each time with progressively more Cadmium Yellow and White added. The shadows are painted on the dunes using a mixture of Dioxazine Purple, Ultramarine Blue, White and a touch of Cadmium Yellow.

Final Step

I touch up with the sand colour and the shadows between the grasses until I am happy with the

balance of sand, shadow and grasses. I repaint the grasses in some places if needed. I add the patches of sunlight through the tree on to the shadowed sand by strategically dabbing a mix of White and a slight touch of Cadmium Yellow.

The patches of sunlight piercing the tree are added using a mixture of Burnt Umber, Cadmium Yellow and White. They are strategically added to the tree. The foliage is added to the tree using a mixture of Forest Green, Burnt Umber, White and Cadmium Yellow.

You can visit my website at www.sandilangridgeart.com for information on my paintings and how to commission an artwork, connect with me through my Facebook page www.facebook.com/sandilangridgeartist.com.au or email me at sandilangridgeart@gmail.com

Having fun with Composition

A good composition can make a painting or drawing, and a bad composition can ruin it. In this article I will explore some of the tricks I've used to convey what I'm thinking about a subject, using a variety of compositions.

As a wildlife artist, one of the best ways to get my artistic message across is through the use of composition (the way you arrange the visual aspect of your art). You can be as complex or as simple as you like, and you can use your imagination as much as you wish, but I believe it's really important to think carefully about composing your art well.

The rule of thirds

Firstly we can explore the most basic, but useful, of compositions, the rule of thirds. This means that you put the focal point of your art on an imaginary line drawn a third of the way in/down/up your painting or drawing. It creates a pleasing and balanced aspect. If you place your focal point right in the middle, it can cut your art in two. The following examples illustrate what I mean.

Here I have an old photograph of myself looking tanned on a beach in Thailand. In one photo I am placed a third of the way into the image (Fig 1), whereas in the other, I am halfway in (Fig 2). I think it is fairly obvious which is the more pleasing and balanced image. I've drawn lines through the major focal points, in this case me on the vertical and the dark land mass on the horizontal.

You will also note that I am "looking into" the picture, which gives the viewer space but is also more pleasing than if I was "looking out" of the picture (looking in the opposite direction while still placed in the same area). I'll discuss this later.

Let's now relate this to our art. My example of a lion's eye shows clearly that I have the focal point a third of the way in from the right and also a third of the way down. (Fig 3)

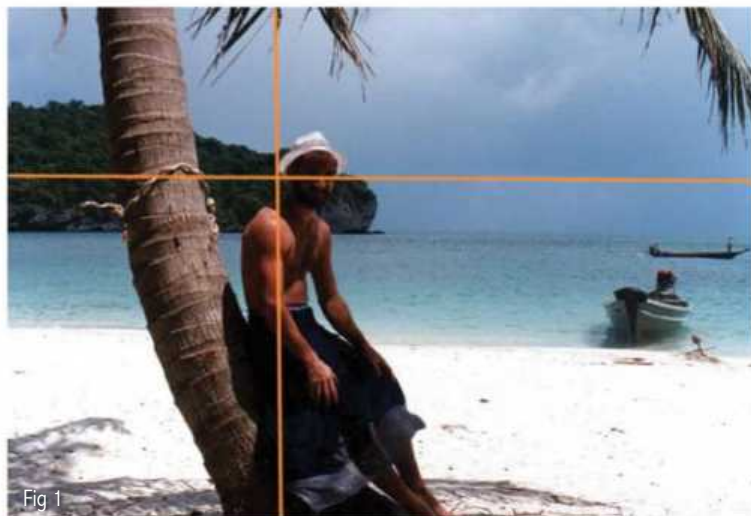


Fig 1

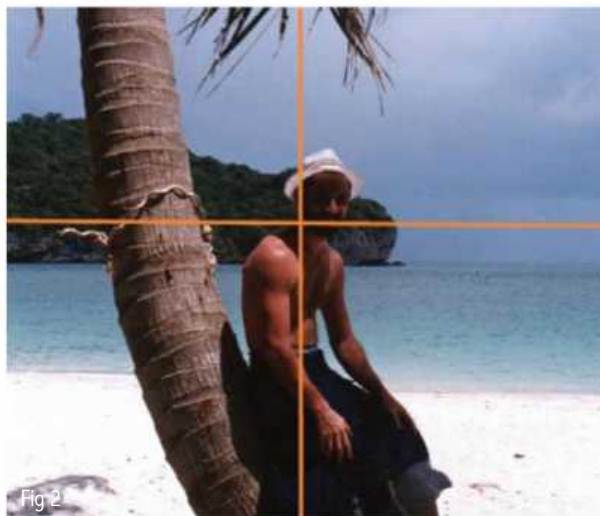


Fig 2

You can take this further and consider using the rule of thirds within a rule of thirds. As you can see from the following image (Fig 4), if we isolate the actual eye, the focal points within that eye, the pupil and the reflections are also on similar thirds. This means that you don't always need to slavishly follow your reference (if you are using a photo to work from) and can actually manipulate your image to create a more pleasing dynamic.

Looking In

"Looking into the picture" as mentioned before is where your subject (a person or

an animal) may be located for example on the left hand third of the picture and is looking towards the right. This helps to create balance, as shown by my pastel of a chimpanzee. (Fig 5) I have then taken the same chimp and cropped it so it is "looking out" of the picture, which creates an unbalanced and less satisfactory image. (Fig 6)

Having said this, I can actually break the rule to tell a story. In the following photograph I have a meerkat "looking out" of the picture (Fig 7). It is placed on the left and has turned its head to look out of the shot. The body is facing to the right



Fig 3



Fig 4



Fig 5



Fig 6



Fig 7

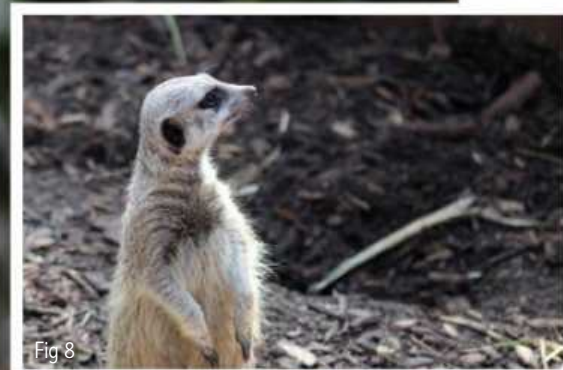


Fig 8

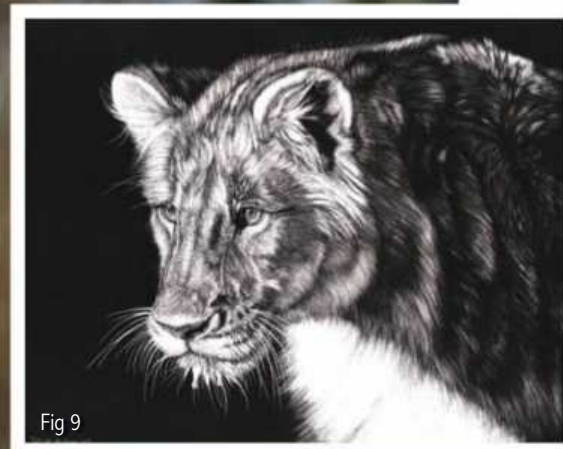


Fig 9

“In this case [above] you can create a tension which makes the viewer believe that our meerkat has turned its head quickly and spotted a threat which we can’t see.”

but the head is facing to the left. In this case you can create a tension which makes the viewer believe that our meerkat has turned its head quickly and spotted a threat which we can’t see. Contrast that with the meerkat looking to the right and here you will simply see a conventionally framed photo but no story is being told. (Fig 8)

Again if we relate this to our art, in the following piece I have a lion “looking out” of the picture to give the viewer the feeling that she has spotted something, a threat or prey. “Looking out” should be used for a purpose rather than accidental. (Fig 9)

In the three following composite pieces I have used the trick of “looking in” to create that Brady Bunch feel (Fig 10). I never watched the show, but the opening credits are famous with the nine stars of the cast looking at each other from television boxes

arranged in the same way as my following three scratchboards of marsupials, emus and meerkats. Of course the Brady Bunch opening credits were moving images so the actors continuously turned to look at each other, but in a static image it makes more sense to have them all looking towards the centre which focuses the viewer’s eye into your art.

Circles or ellipses

When I was at college I had to analyse the painting “Bacchus and Ariadne” by the Renaissance artist Titian (Fig 11). Not only did I have to work out all the symbolism in the painting (long before the internet gave us all the answers), but I had to create two different three dimensional representations of the art. Bacchus, the wine god, has fallen head over heels in



love with Ariadne at first sight and has offered her a crown, represented by the circle of stars in the sky. Titian echoes this circle with his group of people. You can draw an elliptical line through Bacchus' red cloak, following his lower arm and through the heads of the revellers, around through the limb of a cow and back to the cloak and you will now see why I have shown those elements in my rather crude

3D representations (Figs 12 and 13).

Completed circles can help lead the viewer's eye around the painting. In the following elephant scratchboard "Total Protection" (Fig 14) I have used this circle to do not only that but to also tell the story of how these matriarchs are protecting the young ones that you can see on the left and right. Storytelling is a vital part of my wildlife art.





Fig 14

I've used the circle composition a few times including the following pelican and zebras. (Flgs 15 and 16)

Get up close and personal

You can have some real fun with art, definitely with wildlife art, and nowadays with digital cameras it's so easy to rattle off hundreds of photos to find the ones that are just right to work with. I spend a lot of time with animals and try to gain their trust, but some animals make it so easy. A kangaroo was once very curious of my camera and I got this distorted image which I was able to show in the



Fig 15

following scratchboard, "Up close and personal" (Fig 17)

You can use similar tricks to get cute images like my pastel sketch of a meerkat with its head turned upwards (Fig 18), checking out any threats that may be coming from the sky but in the process looking adorable. I've used a high angle, looking down on the meerkat which further emphasises that cute appeal.

Top heavy compositions

This zebra (Fig 19) was a commission from a friend who had a narrow sliver of wall between a window and the corner of his room, and he wanted a piece of art to fill that space. I chose to place my zebra from Etosha in Namibia at the top, and coupled with its reflection it clearly dominates the top third. This creates a strong composition and I've been able to use this to balance off the orange dusty colours at the top with a large expanse of complementary blue at the bottom. You can often use large areas of negative space to balance powerful subjects (in this case the black and white stripes which are also repeated in the reflection).



Fig 16

Diagonals

Diagonals are great for sparking up a composition and creating visual interest.



Fig 17



Fig 18

One of the reasons I do a lot of zebras is they come with their own built-in diagonals which makes things look more dynamic. Examples can be seen here in my scratchboard of a large group of zebras (Fig 20) and also my close-up of a zebra's head (Fig 21) – which you will notice not only includes the diagonals of the stripes but also the whole direction

of the head is diagonally across the image.

It's been fun exploring compositional elements. There are many more which we will touch on in future issues but do have a try and feel free to send in examples to the magazine to show us how you get on.

Web: www.patrickhedges.com ■



Fig 20



Fig 19



Fig 21



Aerial attack

Not if I see you first

My Space – with Greenwood WA
photographer Gary Tate



Gary Tate

As the crow flies, Gary's studio is little more than a stone's throw from my own, for Gary considers the whole of Yellagonga Regional Park as his studio, and with my own studio also very close to the same park, we share much in common as we both use it for inspiration, albeit using different artistic mediums, Gary with his camera and me with my sketchbook. All of this makes this one of the easiest My Space articles I've done. Like me, Gary lives in a suburb that backs onto this extensive regional park and wetlands here in the northern suburbs of Perth, in Western Australia.

I first met Gary through my wife Dot, who as a local Councillor had assisted Gary to get a small area of the park close to the lake fenced off while the Rainbow Bee-eaters were breeding in their burrows close to a well-used pathway. Gary's photos of the birds coming and going were quite exceptional, and his photographic recording gave much impetus to have his request granted by the council to fence off the area during breeding season.

Bee-eaters, like many other species, are seasonal visitors to the wetlands. Visiting in spring and departing in March, they excavate their nest chamber, breeding and fledging their young before moving on.

Gary often cycles on the dual use path that encircles most of the lakes and swamps, always looking for that photo opportunity, but can also be found launching his small boat with a friend as



they head off most mornings each week to dive in the nearby Indian Ocean, just off the coast. I asked him what he thought about the sharks that often move along the coast here, and he just shrugged his shoulders and said, "don't give it much thought". Anyway, after lunch he's back home to collect his camera and ride the path around the lakes.

I visited Gary at his home in the suburb of Greenwood just at the bottom end of the park and lake system. Gary uses a small study room in his house for his photo work where he keeps his camera, photographic aids, lenses filters etc., also his computer, printer, and photographic library, where he can check his work after a ride out around



Images

This page

Above left: Corellas squabbling

Top right: Gary's Studio

Middle right: Morning! I love this photo of an Egret seemingly mesmerised by its own reflection in the water. Usually solitary feeders, they stalk quietly in shallow water for fish, frogs and invertebrates and can regularly be seen around the wetlands.

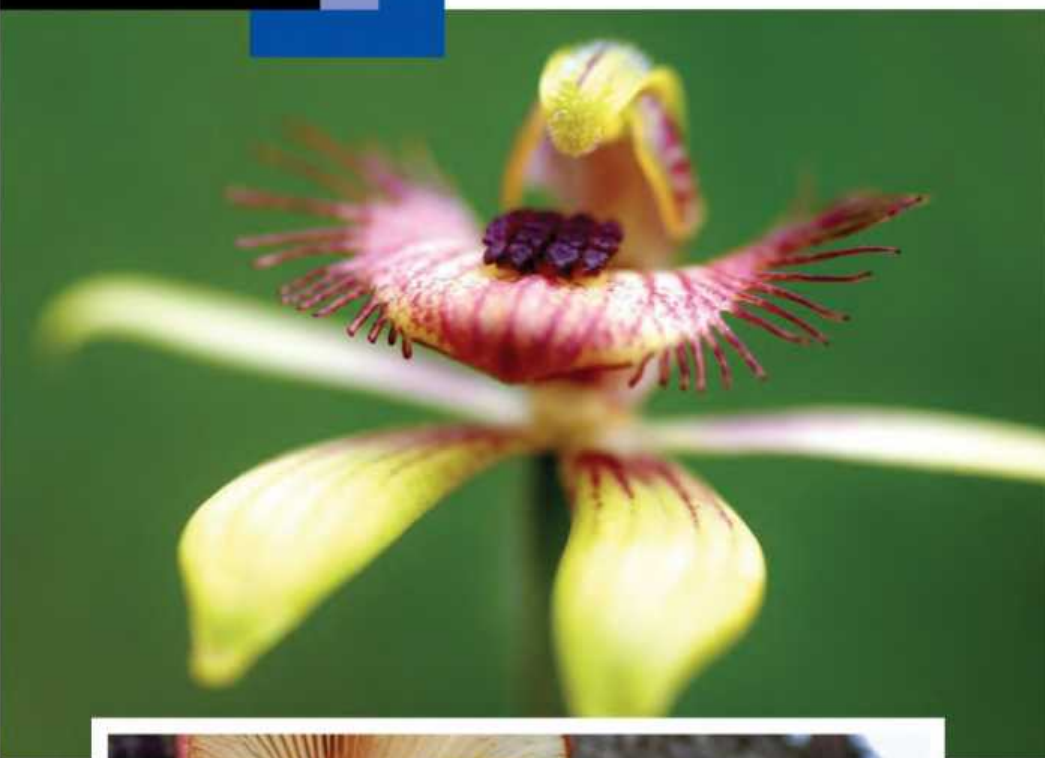
Right: The three wrens can often be found rehearsing in Yellagonga Regional Park

Opposite page

Top: Aerial attack

Below: Gary Tate





the lakes and record his day's work. Gary's photos are often used by the local councils to promote their area, and he has even produced a video of the wetlands by strapping a camera to his helmet and riding around the dual use path with the camera rolling.

After meeting with Gary at his house, we arranged for him to visit my studio to make a short YouTube video I could use as an introduction to my website. He uses a camera similar to my own Nikon, but has many magnifying lenses he can use to zoom in on his subject. I also asked him about a problem I have photographing my own art work, as

Images

This page

Above left and middle left: Gary also likes to record much of the plant and fungal life he sees on his travels

The two shown here are a Caladenia Discoidea Orchid and Purple Wood Fungi.

Above right: Rainbow bee-eater with Dragonfly about to enter its burrow

Left: Nankeen Night Heron

Opposite page

Top: Picnic Cove, Lake Joondalup

Below: A snake in the grass. Tiger snakes are often seen here and we have to be very wary of them, especially during the warmer summer months. We hear many tales of them biting the small dogs while out on their daily walks. This fellow's right on the edge of the pathway, but looks more than happy to have his photo taken.



the flash reflection from the glass ruins many photos. His suggestion was not an expensive polaroid filter or flash light, he said it's best to photograph it before getting it framed, but if it is framed, to try his suggestion. "I always carry two pieces of an old milk carton about the size of a credit card, taped together around the edges, and then hold it over the flash to stop that flash back."

I picked out the photos for this article as they rolled around on his computer screen - needless to say he has hundreds to choose from.

This article has mainly been about Gary's bird photos and for good reason. If you're a keen photographer with our wonderful wetlands at your doorstep, there's many great subjects waiting to

be filmed. One thing synonymous with animal life around our lakes and swamps is their noise, some evenings the frogs can be heard croaking from far away and the birds also like to take their turn, so let your imagination take over for a moment as you look at this last photo, it's unusual to get a photo like this. Blue wrens move around together but seldom stand still for very long, and to catch three in full song makes a wonderful photo. Well done Gary!!

Don't forget if you would like to have your work space featured in this series, why not contact Simon the publisher, and invite others into your world. We would love to see artists, sculptors, and photographers, so why not take this opportunity to show others your work and work space?

Best wishes
Derek

Gary's contact email is:
garytate@westnet.com.au

We would love to see your space in our magazine. Please send some good quality images (300dpi) on cd or dvd or photographs of your studio you want to display in the magazine. If you would like to, you may include a photograph of yourself to accompany the picture/s of your studio. Please also supply your name, suburb and state.

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FROM THE DRAWING BOARD



Brett A Jones

Hi Brett,
What are the benefits of using hatching in drawing rather than other types of shading?

Joy, Gatakers Bay.

Hi Joy,
Others may disagree with me but I really believe it's possible to go just so much further and deeper into the finest level of detail and also the finest of tonal graduations and textures using hatching and crosshatching as a tonal starting point. I am talking about very carefully applied hatching with a sharp pencil. Most people when thinking of hatching/crosshatching go straight to the rougher sketchier type which is fine but not if you are trying to draw as realistically as you can. You can't draw a freehand line drawing with accurate proportions without adding some tone (hatching) to neutralise the tonal optical illusions. The spaces between the hatching lines are blank paper so further lines and details can be added, subtracted (erased), and adjusted without the need to push ever harder on the pencil to make them visible enough to be of any use as you do with shading, thereby extending exponentially the potential development of the drawing into the finest detail levels. Hatching with a very sharp pencil instead of shading with the side of the pencil avoids visually highlighting the actual paper surface texture as well which is almost always counterproductive if an extremely high level of detail and reality is the goal (I say almost because sometimes the paper surface texture can be used to help suggest the texture of the subject you are drawing). Using hatching as a starting point doesn't mean there has to be the slightest evidence of hatching in the finished artwork; it's totally up to the artist how visible it is in the end result depending on the original aim of the artistic idea.

Hi Brett,
How do you sharpen a pastel,

Rose.

Hi Rose,
The best way to get a sharp edge on a pastel is to snap it in half; you get the sharp edges all the way round both edges of the break to play with. In most cases you really don't need to even do this as even with the most rounded lump of pastel there will be a point on it that touches the paper surface first, it's just hard to see exactly where it is till you make the first marks/lines with it. You can only break a

pastel a few times before you are left with a bunch of annoyingly small fragments so I only ever do it on the most crucial of the details, but it is definitely a "go to" method for me at least a few times during any pastel I end up doing. Mostly I just use the blunt lump and start hatching a few very light lines to home in on exactly where that particular bit of blunt lump is drawing lines, then go for it based on that starting point. You might have to turn the blunt lump this way or that a bit to find it's "pointiest bit" relatively speaking but if your hand is light enough it's virtually always possible to describe fine lines, hatching, and small marks with an unsharpened/unbroken pastel. You can always go to pastel pencils if you feel you need a super sharp point but another way to go is to upscale your paper size to begin with so relatively you just don't need the pastels to be so needle sharp anyway. I hold the view that most people who use pastels are far too persnickety with the fine detail anyway (cue pastel pencils) but that is purely a personal belief and should be taken as such. Not to mention a whole other subject.

Hi Brett,
I always get to a point in every drawing I do where I can't see what I should do next. It's always when the drawing is in quite an advanced stage, I can see it's not right but just cannot at all spot where to adjust next. If you could give just one tip when it comes to this what would it be,

Regards,
Jamahl.

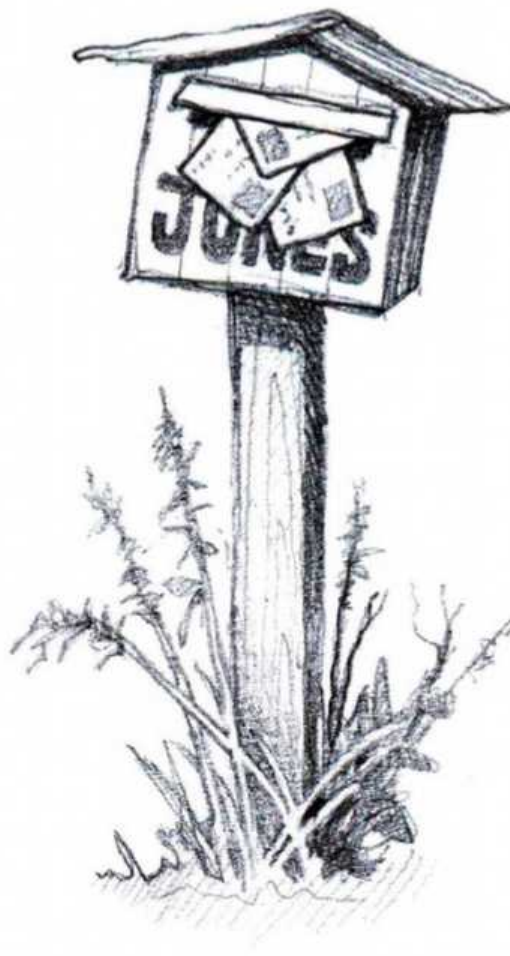
Hi Jamahl,
This always happens to everybody and anybody (including me) in any freehand drawing you'll ever try and do. There are always a whole heap of optical illusions and pre-conceived ideas in the way you are seeing things. Sometimes it can be very easy to let a lot of small proportional errors accumulate which can very effectively "hide" the overall adjustments that need to be made. It can be very hard sometimes to see the true proportions of a given composition as clearly as is needed to move the drawing forward once a certain point is reached. There are lots of tricks and techniques that help but if I could only choose one it would be to narrow it down to one part of one line representing one small part of the drawing. Make yourself forget altogether the rest of the

drawing for a little while, relax, and really inspect and examine this one tiny bit of the layout and honestly compare it to the same feature on the reference source. What you are looking for is the exact direction the line or curve's heading in as well as its exact shape. For example if it's part of the outline of an eye or nose on a portrait it might be slightly curved, curved on one end, heading almost vertical before it starts to curve, curves one way and then the other, etc. If you honestly and closely study any particular part of an outline or feature on a reference image (or real life setting) it will always reveal its true shape and orientation. It works on any part of any line on any drawing. Instead of being constantly overwhelmed by trying to see what's "wrong" with the entire picture you only have to see, decide, and act on improving one tiny part of it. More often than not you will straight away see how the very small part you have been very closely inspecting could be made better in some small (or not so small) way and just as often this will immediately start to reveal other features and lines in the near vicinity that you can definitely see could be moved, altered, adjusted, improved, or refined based on what you noticed about the original bit you "picked on". Then quite often without seeming to even make any conscious decision to do so, you find yourself making proportional adjustments on a part of the drawing quite a distance (or the other side of the layout altogether) from the "part of one line" you originally singled out for extreme attention. Which leads to noticing more and more potential adjustments. Etc. And just like that you are away again moving forward in a positive way in the proportional refinement process.

Greetings Brett,
What would you call the opposite of abstract,
B.P.

Hi B.P.,
I think the technical term for abstract work is "non-representational" as opposed to representational for work that actually "represents" something. It can all be a bit confusing though, realism is also a term for non-abstract. A commonly accepted art show definition of abstract is of a work that has no recognisable subject matter but it's a very bendy "rule" it seems from what I have seen in so called "Abstract categories" at art shows. Contemporary seems to be a synonym for abstract mostly (although unlike pure abstract can actually have recognisable objects and subject matter to a degree) although I think the original spirit

of it was "the latest thing" which seems a poor comparison to abstract since it has been around in the fine art scene for over 100 years now and in the wider world of decorative and architectural design, well, forever really. Op art (optical art) is just very carefully arranged abstract shapes. Expressionism could also be seen to be falling into the realm of abstraction in some ways sometimes. Impressionism can most definitely scrape up against abstract depending upon the subject and style. Surrealism seems to keep a foot firmly wedged in either camp. There are more "isms" than you could possibly imagine when you start to look into it, people seem to love subdividing stuff into meanings, maybe that's "subdivisionism". Hold on while I get my tongue out of my cheek. I think of my work as either representational or realistic/hyper-realistic but really it's just pictures of stuff I really wanted to draw. I guess people that create abstract work know why and are acting on what to them is a strong enough artistic compulsion to act on.



If you have a question for Brett, send it to: From the Drawing Board
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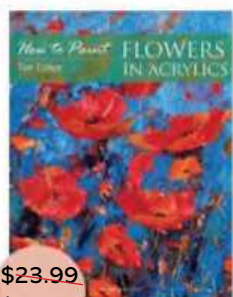
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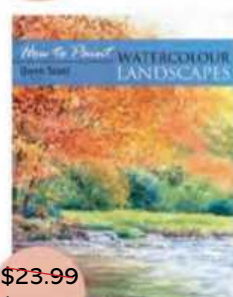
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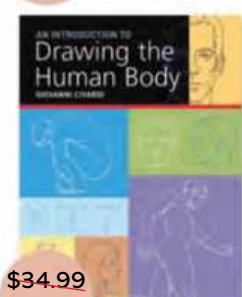
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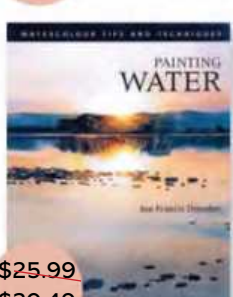
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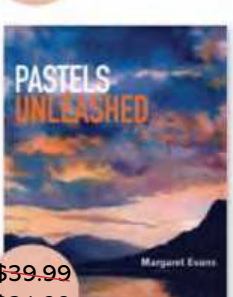
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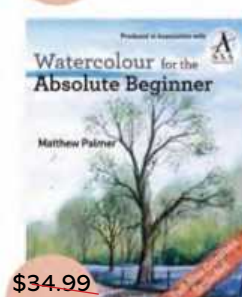
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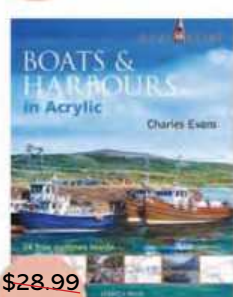
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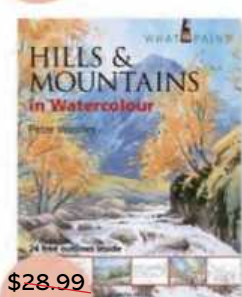
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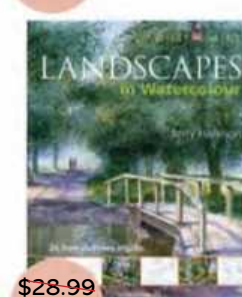
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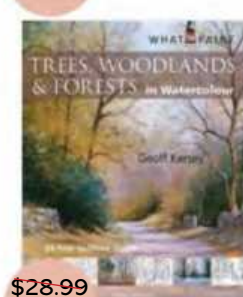
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